

Plan Change 8 & 9

SELWYN PLANTATION BOARD PRIVATE PLAN CHANGE REQUEST

Technical Report on Urban Design

Prepared for

Selwyn District Council

by

Boffa Miskell Limited

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1. Boffa Miskell Ltd has been engaged by Selwyn District Council (SDC) to prepare a Technical Report on Urban Design responding to proposed private Plan Changes 8 and 9 (PC8 and 9) to the operative Selwyn District Plan (SDP). This will be appended to the Section 42a (s42a) Report of Mr Cleese alongside other technical reports.
2. My full name is Timothy John Church. I am employed as a Principal/ Urban Designer with Boffa Miskell Ltd, an environmental consultancy specialising in planning, design and ecology. Boffa Miskell is an original signatory to the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol (Protocol) in March 2005¹.
3. I hold the qualifications of a Master of Urban Design from University of Sydney and a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (with honours) from Lincoln University. I am a member of both the Christchurch Urban Design Panel and New Zealand Urban Design Forum.
4. I have practised as an Urban Designer for the past nine years and Landscape Architect for the previous four years. Prior to joining Boffa Miskell in January 2006, I was an Associate Urban Designer at Levitt Bernstein, a London-based architectural practice.
5. My work at Boffa Miskell has recently included technical reports and council hearing evidence on urban design for Plan Change 10: Improving the Amenity in the High Density Zones (on behalf of QLDC); Plan Change 27: Intensification of Central New Brighton (on behalf of CCC); and Plan Change 29: Business 4 and Retail Park Zones Height and Setback (on behalf of CCC). All these plan changes have now become operative. I have just completed the hearing for Proposed PC53 aimed at improving the amenity of the Living 3 (L3) and Living 4 (L4) zones in Central Christchurch, on behalf of the CCC.
6. I have also been involved with the preparation of the Rolleston Structure Plan and have carried out preliminary urban design work relating to the Rolleston Town Centre and Breach Block land, adjacent to Selwyn District Council's headquarters.
7. The applications for PC8 and 9 have been lodged by Selwyn Plantation Board Limited (Applicant). They were notified on 14 August 2010 with submissions closing on 24 September 2010 (extended due to the Darfield Earthquake). A summary of submissions and a call for further submissions were notified on 10 November 2010. Further submissions closed on 25 November 2010. A total of 33 submissions were received, all of which were in opposition. Some amendments have been made by the Applicant in response to submissions and these latest amendments, circulated on 18th February, have been considered in this report.

¹ The Urban Design Protocol is a non-statutory document administered by the Ministry for the Environment. A wide range of public and private sector stakeholders nationwide have made a voluntary commitment to undertake initiatives to deliver quality urban design. It identifies seven essential design qualities that together create quality urban design, including: Context, Character, Choice, Connections, Creativity, Custodianship and Collaboration. These are referred to as the '7C's'.

8. PC8 and 9 relate to two separate rural blocks and currently seek the following:
- Holmes Block: PC8 proposes to rezone approximately 92ha of existing rural zoned land (Outer Plains) to a new Living 3 zone for 97 rural residential 'Regular Lots' with an average density of one household per 5020m² and five 4ha 'Large Lots'. The property is located on the western outskirts of Rolleston west of the PC1 Urban Limit and directly adjacent to the State Highway.
 - Skellerup Block: PC9 proposes to rezone approximately 72ha of existing rural zoned land (Outer Plains) to a new Living 3 zone for 68 rural residential 'Regular Lots' with an average density of one household per 5157m² and five 4ha 'Large Lots'. The property is located on the southern outskirts of Rolleston to south of the PC1 urban limit.
9. The combined number of rural residential allotments totals 176 with PC8 being proposed for development over the next five years with PC 9 proposed not to be released until 2016.
10. The amendments and additions proposed to the District Plan are described in detail in the application and associated amendments and are summarised within Mr Clease's s42a planning report. An Outline Development Plan (ODP) has been provided by the Applicant for each plan change.
11. I have carried out my own assessment of these private plan change requests and have drawn my own conclusions in regard to PC 8 and 9. I have visited both the Holmes Block (PC8) and Skellerup Block (PC9) on 7th March 2011.
12. This technical report is divided into five sections:
- Scope
 - Strategic Context
 - Site Context
 - Discussion of Urban Design Issues
 - Summary of Recommendations

2.0 SCOPE

13. The technical report reviews proposed PC8 and 9 from an urban design perspective and informs the overall S42a report being prepared by Mr Clease.
14. In preparing my report I have been asked by Selwyn District Council and Mr Clease, the Reporting Officer, to include the following:
- Assess the strategic context of the plan changes, with a focus primarily on the urban design aspects of Proposed Change 1 to the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement and the Rolleston Structure Plan.

- Consider the position taken by Selwyn District Council through its Rural Residential Background Report and Plan Change 17;
 - Peer review of the plan change applications, the urban design issues contained within the applicant's landscape and visual assessment and the urban design outcomes within each request, including the related provisions being promulgated in the plan change to avoid any adverse effects associated with the rezoning and future development of the land;
 - Provide an overall recommendation on the appropriateness of the methodologies used to formulate PC8 and 9 in relation to the design and function of the rural residential nodes and the impact of these on the environment; and
 - Assess the submissions received on PC8 and 9, particularly those that relate to urban design outcomes.
15. While the documentation for PC8 and 9 provides landscape reports prepared by Mr Espie, there has been no specific urban design report presented by the Applicant at the time of writing. As such, I have responded to the proposed plan change based on the information presented and without any technical explanation of their urban design rationale.
16. I have attempted to differentiate between Homes and Skellerup Blocks and their respective plan changes where possible. However, the matters I address are often equally valid for both blocks.

3.0 SITE CONTEXT

17. The Holmes and Skellerup Blocks are located on the south-western side of the existing town of Rolleston.
18. Rolleston is located approximately 23km southwest of Christchurch's central city along State Highway 1. It is the largest town in Selwyn District. The town centre and residential parts of the town are located south of the State Highway and Main South Railway Line corridor through the town with the growing Izone Business Hub directly to the north.
19. The older parts of the town are formed around a grid street pattern integrated with rural roads that radiate out from State Highway 1, two of which connect with Lincoln. More recently a town centre has re-established on Rolleston Drive, just outside the original grid, with a number of 'loop road and lollypop' residential subdivisions surrounding it. Beyond this first layer of suburban subdivisions, other similar subdivisions remain isolated in a fragmented mix of undeveloped urban zoned land and larger rural residential allotments of varying size. This latter pattern of development extends out from the centre of the town in a mainly south and western direction to meet Dunns Crossing and Goulds Roads. Only one Living 2 subdivision extends beyond Dunns Crossing Road between Burnham School and Brookside Roads. Other edges of the town are less distinct and directly abut the rural land that surrounds the town.

20. The Holmes and Skellerup Blocks share the western side of Rolleston with The Pines Wastewater Treatment Plant (Pines WWTP) and The Pines Resource Recovery Park (Pines RRP), both situated along Burnham School Road, and Tegal Foods Limited's intensive poultry farming sheds, adjacent to the northern boundary of the Skellerup Block along Dunns Crossing Road. Rolleston Prison is located directly across State Highway 1 to the north with Burnham Military Camp, some 4km further down the highway, is also on its northern side.
21. A number of strategic documents, primarily the Rolleston Structure Plan and Plan Change 7, guide the future site context and these are outlined below².

4.0 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

22. This section identifies the strategic context from an urban design perspective, including an overview of the following:
- Resource Management Act
 - Canterbury Regional Policy Statement – Proposed Change 1
 - Rolleston Structure Plan
 - Selwyn District Plan
 - Plan Change 7
 - Rural Residential Background Document
 - Plan Change 17

4.1 Resource Management Act

23. The purpose of the Resource Management Act (1991) (RMA) set out in Part 2 is 'to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources' (Section 5(1)). The Act adopts an enabling approach, but is concerned with how these resources are managed and the way in which proposals set about 'avoiding, remedying or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment' (Section 5(2) (c)).
24. Other matters I consider relevant to urban design, to which particular regard must be given, are set out in Section 7:

'The efficient use and development of natural and physical resources (Section 7(b));

The efficiency of the end use of energy (Section 7(ba));

'The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values (Section 7(c));' and

² Rolleston Structure Plan – Rolleston Structure Plan (fig. 5.2, p44)

*'The maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment.
(Section 7(f)).'*

25. In terms of understanding the potential amenity effects arising from the plan change requests, the RMA defines amenity values as:

'Those natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people's appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes.'

4.2 Canterbury Regional Policy Statement – Proposed Change 1

26. The Proposed Change 1 (Development of Greater Christchurch) to the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement (RPS-PC1) outlines the proposed objectives and policies to manage growth across the Greater Christchurch sub-region in a sustainable and consistent way. Along with its predecessor, the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy, both seek to manage growth throughout the Selwyn, Waimakariri Districts and Christchurch City over the next 35 years.
27. Environment Canterbury (ECan) publicly notified RPS-PC1 in July 2007, with four further Variations being notified in August 2008. It has since gone through a hearing with the subsequent Council Decisions on Submissions and Further Submissions being notified in December 2009. While many aspects of this decision are currently under appeal to the Environment Court, which is currently on hold due to the Canterbury earthquakes, it is my understanding that Council hearings will still need to have regard for it.
28. RPS-PC1 provides a strong signal for the locations of future growth in Greater Christchurch by proposing urban limits for greenfield development, Intensification Areas and Key Activity Centres (KAC) to promote consolidated and integrated urban development in Greater Christchurch. It also directs territorial authorities to carry out a number of plan changes and other such methods in the future to better align their existing District Plan provisions. To this end, SDC has prepared the Rolleston Structure Plan, Plan Change 7, Rural Residential Background Document and various design guidance documents.
29. In terms of the current position on rural residential development, the Commissioners' recommendations were inconclusive and directed the territorial authorities, including SDC, to determine the level of provision and particular locations through a subsequent review process. However, they did note the need for a coordinated approach:
- 'In our view the longterm aim should be to ensure that those [rural residential] areas are specifically zoned by the territorial authorities, rather than being randomly selected by developers and advanced as private plan change requests.'* (para 341)
30. The commissioners' also signalled the importance of linking rural residential with those towns that are identified as KACs in of their decision (para 844). This related specifically Prebbleton, identifying, amongst other issues, that it was not suited to further rural residential development due to it not being a KAC.

31. In reference to the provisions for urban development around Rolleston, the Commissioners recognise that there is already considerable business and greenfield residential land provided for under RPS-PC1:

‘The Business land provision section of this decision has already made findings in respect of the approval of significant extra areas of Business land to the west of State Highway One.

So far as residential land to the east of the State Highway is concerned, Variation 1 proposed a very significant addition to the Urban Limits extending from Dunns Crossing Road to the south...

An unusually large number of ODP areas eventuated from that very significant provision of 5,375 households...’ (paras 847-849)

32. The commissioners’ referred to evidence suggesting three types of rural residential considered to be in demand and their particular qualities, with the latter two being most in demand:

‘(i) The demand for larger allotments enabling the running of a number of animals and/or potentially economic intensive horticultural operations requiring something in the order of 4 hectares, or no less than that.

(ii) Secondly, the demand for allotments capable of running a few animals only, and/or an extended garden/orchard area, and ranging anywhere from say 5,000 square metres to 2 hectares.

(iii) Thirdly, what could for lack of a better term be called ‘larger lot’ lifestyle allotments ranging anywhere from 2,000 square metres to say 1 hectare.’ (para 330)

33. However, it is noteworthy that the density definition did change following the decision and this has increased the average allotment size from 0.5Ha to 1Ha:

‘Rural Residential Activities: Residential units outside the Urban Limits at an average density of no less than one per hectare.’

34. Given the context of the Commissioners discussion, I have identified below the relevant parts of RPS-PC1 as notified.

35. Objective 1 ‘Urban Consolidation’, provides for both the consolidated growth within towns and a limitation on the amount of rural residential outside their urban limits.

‘Urban Development in Greater Christchurch shall be managed to achieve consolidation of existing urban areas, to avoid unsustainable expansion outside existing urban areas and to bring about:

...

(e) A move towards sustainable and self-sufficient growth of the towns of Rangiora, Kaiapoi, Woodend, Lincoln, Rolleston and consolidation of the existing settlement of Prebbleton;

(f) Growth in rural-residential development to equate to no more than 5% of the planned growth of households within urban areas.'

36. Although the 5% figure in clause (f) has been found by the commissioners' to be inconsistent with other allocated numbers contained in Policy 6, described below, the direction of RPS-PC1 to limit rural residential is clear. In allowing some rural residential growth, the explanation under the Objective 1 focuses on providing choice:

'Rural residential development is provided for to a limited extent in recognition of the desirability of providing a range of choice in housing types without compromising the overall intent of consolidation in this Regional Policy Statement.'

37. Policy 6 'Integration of Urban Form, and Infrastructure and Sequencing within Identified Urban Limits' allocates a total of 600 rural residential allotments to Selwyn District and spreads these evenly over three periods of household growth up to and between 2017, 2026 and 2041. Proposed PC 8 and 9 request almost one third of this allocation.

38. Policy 14 'Rural Residential Development', clause (iv), guides territorial authorities as to appropriate locations of any proposed rural residential development. It identifies two relevant sub-clauses that in my opinion should be considered in relation to urban design:

- *support existing or upgraded community infrastructure...*

- *where adjacent to or in close proximity to an existing urban or rural residential area, be able to be integrated into or consolidated with the existing settlement'*

39. In further clauses, the RPS-PC1 emphasises the requirement for an integrated design and maintenance of rural character through the ODP and imposes a restriction on further subdivision to smaller, more urban lots:

(v) An Outline Development Plan is prepared which sets out an integrated design for subdivision and land use, and provides for the long-term maintenance of rural residential character.

(vi) A Rural Residential development area shall not be regarded as in transition to full urban development.

40. The reasons given for providing for a restricted allocation of rural residential allotments and reducing the size to below that of a typical 'lifestyle block' is given in the explanation to Policy 14 below:

'Provision for rural residential development enables a choice of living environments and provides a rural living environment which is more space conserving than the four hectare minima of most rural zones within Greater Christchurch. Rural residential development can have significant effects disproportionate to the numbers of households living within this form of development, and more than limited provision would undermine Objective 1 and Policies 1[urban limits] and 2 [intensification].'

4.3 Rolleston Structure Plan

41. Rolleston is predicted to grow from its current population of approximately 7,000 to 20,000 people by 2041 and could reach 50,000 by 2075. The Rolleston Structure Plan, adopted by Councillors in September 2009, provides a cohesive approach to accommodate this significant population growth. It was prepared in part to deliver the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy and RPS-PC1.
42. The Structure Plan incorporates the entire town within a defined Metropolitan Urban Limit (MUL), set through the RPS-PC1 process, and does not just focus on the newer areas allocated for residential and business growth, 'The Structure Plan's purpose is to consider how existing and future development in Rolleston should be integrated in order to ensure that sustainable development occurs and makes best use of natural resources.'(p 6)
43. An overarching vision statement indicates the anticipated outcomes from the implementation of structure plan over the long term. Three key objectives have then guided the Structure Plan proposals, centred on sustainability, good design and realistic aims. Under these a number of principles were developed to provide points of departure for the Structure Plan and future development proposals, including subsequent Outline Development Plans. It was anticipated that these principles would also set the basis for assessing each individual response to the overall Structure Plan proposals.
44. The actual Structure Plan figure was an integration of a number of layers³. The remaining content of the structure plan was divided up into four sections explaining these layers that included the 'Centre Strategy', 'Land Use Patterns and Community Facilities', 'Movement Network' and 'Infrastructure'. At the end of each section an 'Action Plan' and a 'Checklist', against all three key objectives, were prepared. In addition, two further figures were presented identifying the proposed 'Key Neighbourhoods of Rolleston'⁴ and 'Staging of Greenfield Residential Development'⁵, over three time periods short (2016), medium (2041) and long term (2075).
45. The structure plan follows a centres-based approach. It establishes a hierarchy of centres based on the existing Rolleston Town Centre and supported by outlying Neighbourhood and Local Centres. Higher density residential densities surround these centres with major routes connecting between them to facilitate more sustainable transport options.
46. Four major developments were proposed, including 'A refocused town centre', 'A new Recreation Precinct', 'A new 100 hectare Regional/District Park' and 'A mix of housing in Rolleston'.
47. Although the structure plan relates primarily to the area within the MUL, the wider context of Rolleston remains highly important. The inclusion of the 100 ha Regional/District Park, outside the MUL, is just one example of the close, 'symbiotic' relationship that the town needs to have with its rural and peri-urban hinterland to

³ Rolleston Structure Plan – Rolleston Structure Plan (fig 5.2, p44)

⁴ Rolleston Structure Plan – Key Neighbourhoods of Rolleston (fig 5.3, p46)

⁵ Rolleston Structure Plan – Staging of Greenfield Residential Development (fig 5.4, p48)

sustainably manage its growth. There are a range of others and particular references relevant to PC8 and 9 are provided below as part of the 'Discussion of Urban Design Issues'.

4.4 Selwyn District Plan

48. The Selwyn District Plan (SDP) is split into a Township Volume and Rural Volume. Both are relevant when considering rural residential activities in the District, particularly if proposed adjacent to existing townships such as Rolleston. The Township Volume prescribes the objectives, policies and rules to sustainably manage the living and business zones of the District. The Rural Volume of the District Plan incorporates provisions to manage rural land in the District, which include the Rural Inner and Outer Plain Zones.
49. The current zoning of the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks is Rural Outer Plains Zone with a minimum density ratio of one dwelling per 20ha. The Holmes Block is adjacent to a Living 2 Zone, providing for allotments up to 5000m² in size, and the Skellerup Block adjacent to a Living 2A Zone, providing for allotments up to 10 000m² in size. Both these Living Zones are primarily located on the eastern side of Dunns Crossing Road.
50. In the Rural Volume, Policy B4.1.1 discourages residential densities greater than what are prescribed in the District Plan to preserve rural amenity and avoid reverse sensitivity effects. However, an exception is made to these minimum residential densities under Policy B4.1.2, where a dwelling is able to be constructed on any sized allotment for all rural zones, except the Rural Inner Plains Zone, if the following are met:
- Any balance land needed to comply with the minimum density ratio is protected from further development by way of covenant;
 - The clustering of dwellings is minimised to avoid creating new villages or settlements;
 - An appropriate balance of land adjoining the house allotment is of a shape and size to maintain a sense of 'open space'; and
 - The allotment is of an appropriate size and shape to avoid adverse effects on adjoining properties, the road network or potential reverse sensitivity effects.
51. Given the close relationship of the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks to Rolleston township, I consider the following SDP objectives and policies are relevant:
- Objective B4.3.1 facilitates the expansion of townships where it does not adversely affect: (a) Natural or physical resources; (b) Established activities; (c) Amenity values of the township or rural area; or (d) Sites with special ecological, cultural, heritage or landscape values.
 - Objective B4.3.2 promotes new residential development that adjoins existing townships at compatible densities, or at lower densities around townships to achieve a compact township shape. Residential growth is anticipated to align with the preferred growth direction for the townships and to demonstrate consistency with the other related provisions in the District Plan.

- Policy B4.3.2 requires any land that is rezoned for new residential development to adjoin an existing living zone within a township. An exemption is provided for low density living environments, where they need not adjoin a boundary provided they are located in a manner that achieves a compact township shape.
 - Policy B4.3.5 encourages townships to expand in a compact shape and lists the benefits that can be achieved by consolidating urban development.
 - Policy B4.1.3 caters for the development of low-density lifestyle living activities in locations either within, or around the edge of, townships where they achieve the following:
 - Achieves a compact township shape;
 - Consistency with preferred growth options for townships;
 - Maintains the distinction between rural areas and townships;
 - Maintains a separation between townships and Christchurch City boundary;
 - Avoids the coalescence of townships with each other;
 - Reduces the exposure to reverse sensitivity effects;
 - Maintains the sustainability of the land, soil and water resource; and
 - Efficient and cost-effective provision and operation of infrastructure.
52. There are a number of other objectives and policies in the District Plan relating to physical resources that are of relevance to rural residential development. These include the need to ensure that the following are provided:
- Appropriate infrastructure;
 - Safe and efficient road network;
 - Access to safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle links;
 - Conflict with established strategic infrastructure is avoided;
 - Availability of utility services; and
 - Residents are provided access to suitable community facilities and reserves.
53. Plan Change 8 and 9 propose a new Living 3 Zone, which is closely related to the existing Living 2 Zone. In the Township Volume, Living 2 Zones are described as having a lower ratio of built forms to open space and development traits that are reflective of the rural character expected of low density living environments. Living 2 Zones are made up of larger sections that provide:

- More space between dwellings;
- Panoramic views; and
- Rural outlook.

4.5 Plan Change 7

54. Plan Change 7 (PC7) rezones land identified in RPS-PC1 and the Lincoln and Rolleston Structure Plans to provide for the future urban growth of both townships. It provides for coordinated urban growth management through community or council-led planning approach with less reliance is placed on developer-led private plan changes. PC 7 was approved for public notification by Council on 24 February 2010 and a Council Hearing is scheduled for early May.
55. The plan change supports the consolidation of townships while achieving good urban design outcomes. It rezones approximately 585 ha of land in Lincoln and Rolleston to a new “Living Z” or “Living Z Deferred” zone for residential development. It requires Outline Development Plans (ODP) before development can occur with criteria that will need to be addressed within the ODP to support the implementation of the key aspects of both Structure Plans. Staging requirements are incorporated to meet Stage 1 (2007-2020) and Stage 2 (2021-2041) of RPS-PC1.
56. ODP1, or the ‘Stonebrook’ development, is in the first stage of growth provided for under PC7 and will extend greenfield development to the western edge of the MUL, adjacent to the Holmes Block.

4.6 Rural Residential Background Report

57. The Rural Residential Background Report (RRBR) has informed the preparation of PC17 and was adopted by Council on the 22nd February 2011. The purpose of the report was to investigate methods to manage rural residential development in the eastern portion of Selwyn District.
58. The RRBR researched a number of potential forms of residential development to identify more sustainable rural residential environments. The ‘peri-urban’ nodal approach is preferred with potential for the following qualities:
- Avoids ribbon development along infrastructure alignments;
 - Sets definitive boundaries to limit growth and reduce the risk of and peri-urban sprawl or the blurring of the urban edge, whilst not precluding the future residential growth;
 - Provides a degree of separation from urban areas utilising natural features, greenbelt buffers and physical barriers;
 - Avoids acting as gateways to townships but provides connections from rural residential developments to urban areas;
 - Establishes informal links between urban areas and the rural periphery via green open space that supports connectivity;

- Within comfortable cycling and walking commuter distances to reduce reliance on motor vehicles, preferably via direct, safe and pleasant routes;
- Avoids the collective effects of higher densities, such as less peace, quiet, openness and privacy, through relatively small nodes of less than 50 allotments;
- Achieves environmental gains through the protection of significant ecological, amenity or landscape values; and
- Located in close proximity to infrastructure services, such as reticulated water and sewer connections.

59. A 'Township Study Area' assessment was carried out specifically for Rolleston and illustrated in a series of analysis maps⁶.

The report prescribes a set of generic and area-specific criteria, based on the theoretical and contextual research undertaken and six guiding principles⁷. This aimed to ensure that rural residential households are well located, meet character expectations and are appropriately staged⁸.

60. Plan Change 17 (PC17) proposes to incorporate a strategic planning framework into the District Plan to manage rural residential activities in the eastern part of the District. It is specifically concerned with providing for the strategic growth of rural residential activities on the periphery of townships within the Greater Christchurch area of Selwyn District. PC17 has been recently notified and at the time of writing is out for submissions, due to close in late April.

61. PC17 proposes to rezone a portion of rural zoned land outside the Urban Limits of Townships to accommodate approximately 170 households, which has been determined to be the optimal number that is able to be sustainably managed in the District up to 2016. PC8 represents 102 or 60% of this allocation with PC 9 proposed to follow thereafter.

62. The criteria and research provided through the RRBR was used to complete the 'preferred locations' assessment' for rural residential development in Rolleston⁹. Of the two potential sites identified through the assessment process, 30ha of the Holmes Block was the only site on the south-western side of Rolleston. This was nominated for 50 rural residential households for the period up to 2016. The Skellerup Block was not identified.

⁶ Rural Residential Background Document Report, February 2011 (Chapter 5, p58 and Appendix 6, Maps 1a-e and Appendix 7)

⁷ Rural Residential Background Document Report, February 2011 (Chapter 4, p35)

⁸ Rural Residential Background Document Report, February 2011 (Chapter 6, pp85-94)

⁹ Proposed Plan Change 17 – Rural Residential Activities, February 2011 (Attachment 2, pp4-11)

5.0 DISCUSSION OF URBAN DESIGN ISSUES

63. This report responds to urban design related issues raised through submissions on PC8 and 9. I have structured my response under the following topic headings:
- Urban Form and Coordinated Growth
 - Community Cohesion and Continuity
 - Urban Containment and Edge Conditions
 - Character and Amenity Provisions
 - Choice and Diversity
64. In discussing these topics, each section is structured as follows:
- Identifying relevant submissions;
 - Providing an urban design response;
 - Selecting relevant aspects of the Rolleston Structure Plan;
 - Considering these against the proposed plan changes; and
 - Conclusions.
65. My discussion below should be read in the context that some allowance for rural residential has been made under RPS-PC1 and PC17 for the Selwyn District. As such, the focus of my discussion is more on the location(s) and scale of the proposed plan changes under this strategic context.

5.1 Urban Form and Coordinated Growth

Relevant Submissions

66. A number of general submissions were made opposing PC8 and 9 that have referenced issues related to Urban Form and Coordinated Growth. These are listed below and quoting particular aspects of concern:
- D Booth (S3 D1) oppose the plan changes, particularly ‘the density of the development proposal’...‘This calls into question the Countryside Areas and consistency with the Rolleston Structure Plan’
 - Malvin Griebel (S4 D1) and Janice Griebel (S5 D1) both oppose the plan changes, particularly the role of the Selwyn Plantation Board ‘...as to the effect the removing of trees without their being replaced has on our environment when taking into account global warming’...‘[and] take into account that SPB should be using this land for other, environmentally friendly purposes such as replanting trees, re-pasturing for cattle.’

- Bob Paton (S13 D1) and Alison Burrowes (S16 D1) oppose the plan changes, particularly as 'Land Zoned Rural Outer Plains... is most suited to dairying or dairy support or forestry'...' the Inner Plain Zone would also be more suited to rural residential development.'
- Canterbury Regional Council (S18 D1) oppose the plan changes, particularly that Plan Change 8 and 9 '...due to the large number and relatively small lot size of the rural residential development proposed at this location, would not integrate with, or consolidate, with existing rural or activities of the locality or with the nearby Rolleston township but will form a low density suburb detached from Rolleston.'
- B&A George and S&S Cunningham (S20 D1) oppose the plan changes, particularly 'that land re-zoned for rural residential purposes should be situated close to employment opportunities. It is submitted that a vast majority of people who may purchase the proposed sections are likely to be employed in Christchurch rather than Rolleston'
- Denwood Trustees (S22 D1) oppose the Plan Change, particularly 'this would also result in an intervening area of land currently held in a number of relatively small titles, some with existing dwellings, and similar size to each of the PC8 and 9 blocks, being left 'sandwiched' between and separating the two proposed rural residential blocks'...'the Holmes (PC8) and Skellerup (PC9) are comparatively large, regular in shape and in single ownership, so could support a range of economic productive uses'

67. Specific Relief:

- Poultry Industry Association of NZ Inc. & Tegal Foods Ltd. (S8 D2) seeks an amendment that should the Plan Change be approved, the scale should be reduced to be more consistent with Plan Change 1 (i.e. a lower number of lots).
- New Zealand Transport Agency (S11 D1) seeks an amendment that the minimum allotment size be increased to 1 hectare to be in alignment with the definition of 'rural residential' in PC1.
- New Zealand Transport Agency (S11 D2) seeks an amendment that the maximum number of allotments permitted within a staging period in new rule 12.1.3.39 is reduced to properly reflect the average density requirement in PC1 of 1 household per hectare.

Urban Design Response

68. In my view, good urban form is ensuring a close match between higher density residential land use and convenient access to residents' key destinations, such as employment, shopping, community facilities and the like. The more closely integrated built form and local activities are the more effective and efficient the utilisation of existing and planned infrastructure, such as public transport, is. There are, of course, other social benefits that I will touch on later. This principle closely aligns with the 'compact cities' and centres-based, mixed use approaches to planning for sustainable urban growth as purported through RPS-PC1.

69. Urban edges tend to be the fastest growing areas around many towns and cities and hold high strategic, spatial, economic and environmental significance. At lower densities, the consumption of land can be far more than higher-density urban centres and the spread of development can proceed at a greater rate than population growth. These urban edges, commonly referred to as 'peri-urban' areas, can develop in a piecemeal way relative to those within existing parts of a town, where there is an established urban context to 'stitch' into. Land parcels also gradually get smaller and more fragmented in peri-urban areas, even for non-urban land uses. Conflicts invariably arise between different land uses with different needs. In my opinion, planning for continuity of urban form in these areas becomes harder to predict and, therefore, need to be managed in a sustainable way.
70. The proposed rural residential developments are one of many land uses that compete to occupy these peri-urban areas, in addition to maintaining the existing rural land. There are more intensive rural activities utilising the efficiency benefits of being close to urban areas, such as the intensive poultry farming sheds adjacent to the Skellerup Block. There are the large public utilities required to service the town, but are inappropriate to locate within an urban area, such as The Pines RRC and Pines WWTP near the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks. There are also other uses to consider that may associate with tourist, cultural, recreation or businesses uses that need to utilise rural settings and/or a proximity to large infrastructure. These types of uses are already evident along State Highway 1 between Christchurch and Rolleston, where light industrial units, tractor sales yards, holiday parks, churches, large retail outlets and other such activities have incrementally crept into the rural land. In most cases a multitude of small decisions have cumulatively lead to widespread alteration in peri-urban land uses, often over relatively short time periods. From an urban design perspective, decisions regarding the most appropriate activities for peri-urban areas around towns, such as Rolleston, should be weighted on what is the most efficient urban form and which provides the most benefit for their urban residents.
71. In several respects rural residential development can be seen as a potential liability for the wider community. There are considerable inefficiencies inherent in dispersed, single use rural residential developments where housing is separated from employment and community services. In my experience, it demands an extensive road network to provide and facilitate access to low density residential development with a high dependence upon cars and commercial service vehicles. Other infrastructure inefficiencies include providing communications, electricity, sewerage and water facilities where long runs of network services are required to serve very low densities. Social infrastructure such as schools, police stations and health service facilities, are also likely to be affected by trying to accommodate enlarged and dispersed administrative boundaries. I consider this represents a distinct shift from a productive rural activity involving a limited number of people, to one of mass consumption of a broad range of resources, services and values. In many instances this type of activity is discretionary in nature and can displace those more essential activities further out where urban form relationships can be undermined.
72. For rural residential developers and residents themselves, there are additional establishment, functional and maintenance commitments related to creating, living in and managing larger allotments. The breakdown in urban form relationships described above, result in residents being less able to access key destinations, such as employment, shops, professional services and recreational and cultural activities,

through public transport or being within convenient distances for walking (800m) or cycling (1.5km).

73. These can be compounding issues in relation to land-take. Multiple cars are typically required within a household to provide for a diverse range of movement needs, leading to bigger garages or hard stand areas. Poorer access to community facilities is also more likely to lead to a desire for residents to provide for their own recreational activities, such as tennis courts and swimming pools. In my opinion, many of these amenities can be reasonably substituted for community based facilities, where urban form efficiencies can be gained and quality improved, providing a critical mass of residents can be achieved within a higher density urban environment.
74. There are also longer term consequences resulting from decisions made now, as such changes from rural to urban uses are difficult to reverse. In my opinion, the existing urban form inefficiencies for rural residential development will potentially become greater over time. An important consideration in urban development today is to create resilient communities. This aims to minimise the risk of future dependency by providing the ability for residents to adapt to increasing costs of mobility from rising energy costs. This is particularly relevant in the context of Rolleston's existing low levels of self sufficiency in employment and retail provision.
75. As RPS-PC1 and PC17 provide for some rural residential, urban form considerations indicate those areas with good proximity and with the strongest links to the existing and planned community should be prioritised when identifying appropriate locations for developments.

Rolleston Structure Plan

76. While aspirational, the vision statement in the structure plan document sets the tone for the policies it contains. The following excerpt from the vision indicates that the future development of the town is anticipated to lead by example in relation to sustainable development:

'Rolleston is recognised as one of the most desirable places to live and work in the region and businesses are keen to establish themselves here. This has been boosted by the reputation gained by the town's long term approach to sustainable development, which is now frequently used as a successful model by other towns facing the ongoing impacts of energy shortages and climate change.'

...

'Most places are within an easy walk if parents want to take the kids down to the park to play or dash down to the local shops for milk; if they need a bit more they just catch the bus into town.'

77. To achieve this, the emphasis of the structure plan has been on resuming the early intentions of a planned community at Rolleston, which integrates with and enhances the more recent market-led one, where subdivision was largely uncoordinated and disconnected.

78. The Rolleston Structure Plan attempts to orientate medium to higher density residential development around defined mixed use centres, primarily based on a 'refocused' existing town centre¹⁰. These are linked together via the utilisation of the existing rural road alignments and supplemented with new interconnecting roads through larger greenfield development blocks. The location of centres and a proposed central park 'n' ride facility, linking with express routes to Christchurch, enables both orbital and destination-based public transport routes to be created¹¹.
79. Under the 'A Well Designed Rolleston' objective, the design principle that address urban form specifically is Principle 4, 'Higher density development at nodal points:
- *Closely match the spread of population density to centres and/or key movement corridors, including public transport routes, which require the highest levels of activity and provide the higher quality amenities.*
 - *Establish smaller block sizes within higher density areas to maximise the choice of routes and reduce travel distances.'* (p16)
80. The centre strategy is the main framework for the structure plan and a clear hierarchy of land use and movement patterns has been established. This revolves around the existing town centre with outlying Neighbourhood Centres, located on the main radial routes, and local centres, servicing daily needs within more comfortable walking distances (i.e. 400m or five minutes).
81. To the west of the structure plan, two neighbourhood centres have been identified, one for each of the proposed Brookside and Goulds Road neighbourhoods¹². Recent discussions with Mr Wood, a policy planner at SDC, indicates that the Brookside Neighbourhood Centre, closest to the Holmes Block, is unlikely to be delivered due to the lower density of existing lots in this existing part of Rolleston. However, he noted a local centre of approximately 450m² in size is proposed within the Stonebrook ODP, close to where it is indicated on the structure plan. The formation of the Goulds Road Neighbourhood Centre is currently proposed within the SR6 ODP, or Fosters development, in Stage 1 of the greenfield residential development in Rolleston¹³. This is currently associated with a 'proposed main (primary) road', which links across the southern half of the Rolleston Structure Plan between Weedons Road and Dunns Crossing Roads, and intersects with the southern part of the Skellerup Block. In addition, one of two outlying local centres is shown to be on a 'proposed local (secondary) road', which intersects with the northern part of the same block.
82. In my view, Section 7.2.4 'Benefits of Higher Densities' most succinctly summaries this sustainable urban form approach from a residential land use perspective and reinforces the restriction on re-subdividing rural residential land under RPS PC1:

'There are many benefits of higher density housing being located close to town and neighbourhood centres. Higher densities enhance the viability of the centres due to a larger population within a comfortable walking distance.'

¹⁰ Rolleston Structure Plan – Rolleston Structure Plan (Fig 5.2, p44)

¹¹ Rolleston Structure Plan – Public Transport Route Patterns (Fig 8.5, p115)

¹² Rolleston Structure Plan – Key Neighbourhoods of Rolleston (Fig 5.3, p46)

¹³ Rolleston Structure Plan – Staging of Greenfield Residential Development (Fig 5.4, p48)

Public transport services are also more feasible when there are concentrations of people close to bus stops and interchanges along transport corridors. An increase in walking to shops and usage of public transport reduces dependency on the car, which in turn creates less pollution, less demand for parking and greater health benefits. On greenfield developments it is important to set reasonable target densities early and not rely on piecemeal infill to increase density over time. After residential areas have established, there is often difficulty in managing transition issues over time. This is due to expectations of existing residents being accustomed to lower density amenities and other constraints to intensification, such as land acquisition and infrastructure capacity. In a town expansion like Rolleston, it is prudent to provide opportunities for higher density living and growth around centres during the initial development stages, before such issues arise.’ (p82)

83. This is further reinforced with the provision of community and education facilities:

‘The development of facilities within Rolleston such as a High School, swimming pool and recreation centre will reduce the need to travel to obtain these services and help build a stronger community.’ (p101)

84. The most community facilities identified in the structure plan are centrally located within the town, concentrated either near the town centre or Recreation Precinct. The High School, likely to have a large catchment area, is intended to be co-located with the Recreation Precinct. The two established primary schools, Rolleston and Clearview, are also in close proximity. Others identified are indicative, but again tend to be associated with the proposed neighbourhood structure, including the Goulds Road Neighbourhood closest to the Skellerup Block¹⁴. The existing parts of the town, such as Brookside Neighbourhood, closest to the Holmes Block, would continue to associate with those primary schools already established and pupils would likely need to travel further.
85. From a transport perspective, section 8.1 introduces the anticipated outcomes for the ‘Movement Network’:

‘A cohesive and efficient movement network is required for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. The new movement routes created as Rolleston develops will integrate with existing routes, providing effective linkages and efficient movement for all types of travel. There will be a focus on encouraging the community to use alternative transport methods reducing the use of private vehicles. Movement by walking, cycling and public transport reduces energy consumption, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, increases social interaction and helps build healthy communities.’ (p104)

Proposed Plan Changes

86. The potential for alternative peri-urban land uses for some or all of the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks that could provide more effective and efficient urban form relationships, but do not appear to have been considered in the s32 analysis. Neither

¹⁴ Rolleston Structure Plan – Key Neighbourhoods of Rolleston (Fig 5.3, p46)

does the status quo option recognise the retention of the land for future unforeseen uses as a potential benefit.

87. The ODPs that have been presented do not adequately demonstrate the contexts in which they sit or relationship with the proposed urban form of Rolleston, as presented in the structure plan document. Nevertheless, the Holmes Block is positioned adjacent to the existing and established routes of Burnham School and Brookside Roads, which lead toward Rolleston Town Centre over 2km to the east. There is also the local centre as proposed in the Stonebrook ODP, providing mainly for daily needs, and I recommend coordinating the alignment of the access road into Stonebrook with the proposed entrance off Dunns Crossing Road to facilitate access to this centre. However, the unlikely provision of a Neighbourhood Centre in Brookside means that most residents in the development will probably need to drive to Rolleston Town Centre for most of their regular goods and services, such as a range of local shops, childcare, community facilities and social services. I consider this to be a limiting factor to the number of allotments that can be efficiently accommodated in the Holmes Block, due to the number of residents left without convenient access to a larger centre.
88. I also consider the lack of public transport and distance from other existing and proposed community facilities within central Rolleston, including the facilities proposed in the Recreation Precinct and schools, remains a concern.
89. The Skellerup Block is more differentiated from the Holmes Block in that it is more associated with future greenfield development. Until these routes and supporting community facilities are established, particularly the neighbourhood centre on Goulds Road, I find it difficult to support the development of a rural residential block in this isolated location and I, therefore, support the recent PC9 amendment to stage the development in 2016. If it were to proceed, I recommend the development contributes to the proposed main (primary) road linking the Block with the Neighbourhood Centre on Goulds Road as it would directly benefit from these urban amenities. Again, from an urban form perspective, I do not consider the number of allotments proposed for the Skellerup Block could be sustainably managed in this location and recommend these be reduced or removed.

Recommendations

90. I recommend further considerations should be given to alternative peri-urban land uses that better contribute to sustainable management of the town and its rural context.
91. If PC8 and 9 were to proceed, I recommend reducing the overall number of allotments within the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks to reflect the nodal approach of RBRR/PC17 and to incorporate the following recommendations:
- Identify on each ODP key community linkages to be established with existing and proposed facilities within the MUL, as indicated in the Rolleston Structure Plan. Amend ODPs and assessment matters to ensure these are direct, pleasant and varied.
 - Coordinate the proposed road alignment connecting the Holmes Block to Dunns Crossing Road with that proposed for the Stonebrook development opposite to facilitate access to its local centre.

- Coordinate the proposed road alignment connecting the Skellerup to Dunns Crossing Road with that proposed for the Neighbourhood and Local Centre within the Goulds Road Neighbourhood.
- Utilise development contributions from the Skellerup Block to facilitate the proposed main (primary) road link with it and the proposed Neighbourhood Centre on Goulds Road.

92. In response to submissions seeking specific relief:

- I concur with the Poultry Industry Association of NZ Inc. & Tegal Foods Ltd. (S8 D2) seeks an amendment that should the Plan Change be approved, the scale should be reduced to be more consistent with Plan Change 1 (i.e. a lower number of lots). I consider these should be closely aligned with the RBRR/PC7 nodal approach providing for 50 allotments.
- I consider the recent ODP amendments, dated 11th February 2011, addresses the submissions by the New Zealand Transport Agency (S11 D1 and D2) seeking an amendment that the minimum allotment size be increased to 1 hectare to be in alignment with the definition of 'rural residential' in PC1. This is achieved through the addition of five 'Large Lots' in each Block and the re-distribution of a large proportion of land into the Countryside Areas shown on the ODP.

5.2 Urban Containment and Edge Conditions

Relevant Submissions

93. A number of general submissions were made opposing PC8 and 9 that have referenced issues related to Urban Containment and Edge Conditions. These are listed below and quoting particular aspects of concern:

- D Booth (S3 D1) oppose the plan changes, particularly 'Inappropriate use of Outer Plans zoned land for rural residential purposes'
- Malvin Griebel (S4 D1) and Janice Griebel (S5 D1) both oppose the plan changes, particularly with regard to the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy 'This Strategy very clearly marks the boundary as being Dunns Crossing Road...There is currently, nor in the foreseeable future, any shortfall in the provision of housing in the Rolleston area as defined by that Strategy. Should the SPB succeed with their proposals, then there would be no certainty to landowners and the community as to the extent of the urban boundary...Currently the boundaries for housing are very neat, clear and accepted by most. By permitting PC8 and 9, the SDC would be introducing an amoeba effect to these boundaries...'
- Bob Paton (S13 D1) and Alison Burrowes (S16 D1) oppose the plan changes, particularly as 'the plan changes will result in a major and fundamental change to the integrity of Rolleston township plan to 2045 as set in the Rolleston Structure Plan and LTCCP'

- B&A George and S&S Cunningham (S20 D1) Oppose Decline the Plan Change, particularly as 'The Council needs to complete its rural residential planning process in a comprehensive manner without ad hoc private plan change applications undermining its efforts to provide for the District'
- Denwood Trustees (S22 D1) oppose the plan changes, particularly 'The boundaries of PC8 and 9 are clearly entirely related to land ownership considerations rather than based on logical and defensible zone boundaries...'
- General submissions indicating there is sufficient zoned land within the MUL of the Rolleston Structure Plan to accommodate growth needs, include:
 - L & L Field & Lanlee Ltd S10 D1 oppose the plan changes
 - R & B Salthouse S12 D1 Oppose Decline the Plan Change
 - Bob Paton S13 D1 oppose the plan changes
 - Alastair King S15 D1 oppose the plan changes
 - Alison Burrowes S16 D1 oppose the plan changes
 - Susan Chaney S27 D1 oppose the plan changes

94. Those submitters seeking specific relief, include:

- Paul Mason (S31 D2) seeks an amendment 'that as an alternative the development should not proceed until all residential land in the District Plan has been developed.'
- Ernest Smith (S21 D1) seeks an amendment to 'significantly reduce (by at least 50%) the number of lots allocated to SPBL. This could be achieved by deleting either one of Plan Changes 8 or 9'

Urban Design Response

95. The existing residents of Rolleston are in a fortunate position that rural land is always in reasonably close proximity and this currently characterises it as a 'rural town'. There are those residents in larger cities that rarely experience rural life, as it is so detached, and this provides a point of difference for towns like Rolleston. I consider the rural land has an important value for both defining and contrasting the town.
96. Rural residential developments occupy land between the built up edge of an urban area and the truly rural hinterland. As discussed above, they are often intermediate land uses that seek to maintain connections between urban and rural land. They can also share this space with other peri-urban uses, but are distinct from other parts of a town where there is usually greater continuity of urban development.
97. Progressive development of peri-urban areas can erode the edge with the potential loss of a consistent or legible relationship between rural and urban land. It establishes a 'blurred edge' to the town and rural residential and other peri-urban uses can result in it being difficult to identify the outer boundary of this zone. In my opinion, this blurred

edge can appear messy and uncoordinated, with many hard elements that continue to dominate beyond the urban edge. From an urban design perspective, this blurred edge flattens density gradients and creates a diminished sense of arrival and departure from a town, which can dilute the 'gateway' experience. This can accentuate a sense of 'placelessness' that can often be felt by smaller towns when gradually absorbed into larger conurbations, such as Christchurch.

98. To achieve a strong edge that maintains integrity and distinctiveness of rural and urban environments, clear relationships need to be established between urban areas and open spaces, inside and outside urban boundaries. This can be difficult with a continually migrating urban edge, such as in the initial stages of Rolleston's development, but can achieve a more stable state between defined outer boundaries as towns fill out.
99. The pressure to develop rural land is often increased by land speculation by developers and land owners who seek to convert it to urban uses to achieve a steeper 'planning gain'. This tends not to be a controlled process induced for the wider benefit of the town, but decisions by individual developers for a limited number of purchasers who benefit from the rural values protected up to this time.
100. From an urban design perspective, I consider it important to concentrate on the needs of the town, and regard nearby non-urban areas as the means to satisfy these needs through the provision of land and resources. Non-urban resources could include protected landscapes and uses that embody environmental values, such as recreation and open space; essential infrastructure, such as utility installations and major urban infrastructure; tourist uses or more intensive agriculture. These often have large land requirements, yet equally need to coexist close to urban areas.
101. Given the uncertainty about the future needs, it would be prudent to retain the possibility for a range of flexible land use options around the town. Peri-urban areas can potentially provide us with valuable areas on the periphery of urban areas where innovative responses can assist in the process of human adaptation to rapid change. They can be sites which aid resilience of natural and human systems in times when issues, such as climate change, have uncertain consequences for the ability of urban communities to sustain themselves. In my opinion, these should be prioritised according to the economic, social and environmental needs of the town. Although quite urban, the Izone Business Hub to the north of Rolleston's town centre is one such example of the types of non-residential uses that have been considered and can bring economic benefits to the town
102. In my opinion, there is a diminished incentive for greater urban living if neighbourhoods are further detached from the amenity of rural land or, at least, larger open spaces. The productiveness of urban areas and the well-being of residents will depend on both the quality and type of relationships between urban areas and their rural hinterlands.
103. The protection of rural land, or land for appropriate future peri-urban uses, and the containment of urban growth are interacting measures. Urban growth boundaries or Metropolitan Urban Limits (MUL) as used in Greater Christchurch are widely used internationally. When properly applied they can achieve considerable benefits, such as the separation of rural from urban land, the containment of urban areas, or the orderly release of urban land. The clearer the demarcation and the more land that is reserved for urban purposes, the more successful a MUL is likely to be in preventing

urbanisation of rural land and equally encourage intensification of an existing urban area.

104. In my experience, the use of ring roads as a means to define between urban and rural areas is considered an unsatisfactory method, as it can lead to further urban development clustered around the roadway, the opposite effect from what is intended.
105. A common and well tested response, particularly in British towns and cities, is to establish an additional 'green belt', usually located between the urban growth boundary and a defined outer boundary. This can achieve both a strong urban edge and the large open space amenity and recreational infrastructure that benefit a community.
106. Both MULs and green belts can either be managed through a staged release of land, often through a deferred zoning; fixed in place over time; or as a combination of the two. In all cases it requires a strong regulatory policy and/or land purchase programs to give them effect. Regulation is required across urban, peri-urban and rural land uses. For instance, unregulated lot sizes outside the MUL may increase the attractiveness of rural residential and life-style blocks and lead to development that 'leap-frogs' a green belt.

Rolleston Structure Plan

107. The structure plan vision clearly aligns itself with the anticipated outcomes of a strong urban containment approach:

'While [Rolleston] has kept a close association with Christchurch, it remains a town in its own right. The town has been successful in drawing a distinctive character from its close associations with the rural landscape in which it discretely sits - you can still catch glimpses of the Port Hills or Southern Alps as you move around the town.'

108. The RPS-PC1 process initiates a regulatory approach of applying an urban limit to existing and proposed growth areas within Greater Christchurch. Rolleston has been identified through this process as one of the largest greenfield growth areas:

'The Rolleston metropolitan urban limit (MUL) has a potential long term land capacity of up to 50,000 should full intensification of existing areas and development of all greenfield areas (886 Ha) occur. This could be accomplished within 70 years. As a result, Selwyn District Council has developed the Rolleston Structure Plan to provide a strategic framework to guide the development process.' (p6)

109. The considerable extent of the MUL, adopted by Council in July 2008, provides sufficient greenfield land to accommodate future urban growth and help avoid dispersed settlement patterns. This also provides the Council with the ability to maintain a compact town through the programmed release of land. Due to the lack of significant landscape features within the immediate Rolleston context, as discussed in Mr Craig's landscape report, the MUL has been defined in other ways:

'Overall, the Structure Plan provides for consolidated, sustainable and coordinated development and the staged provision of all services. Its MUL

was developed on nonnatural growth boundaries, including State Highway 1 (Main South Road), the proposed airport noise contour, The Pines (wastewater treatment plant) and rural roads. Within the MUL, cadastral boundaries have generally been used to define the growth areas.’ (p42)

110. In particular, the western boundary of the MUL follows Dunns Crossing Road with the exception of a small existing L2 zone across the road, which is also included¹⁵. Both the Holmes and Skellerup blocks are outside this urban boundary.
111. Through the structure planning process a further mechanism for containing the town and defining the edge was introduced. The ‘greenbelt’ concept was adopted and described in section 7.7.1:

‘A landscape buffer strip will be created between the MUL and the surrounding rural areas. The size and width would be approximately 50 metres. The width may vary to accommodate existing landscape features and linkages into the MUL. The ‘Green Belt’ concept would incorporate horse riding/cycleways and running/walking tracks, ecological habitat creation, stormwater management areas, specimen and avenue tree planting, shelterbelts for wind protection, and could integrate the road boundary reserve areas into the landscape treatment. The design of planting in the greenbelt should aim to retain distant views where possible while also providing shelter from wind. This design co-ordination between the greenbelt and adjacent roads could also include intersection design and avenue plantings that extend into the town. A strong visual sense of open rural character and amenity in the design of the buffer is important. The greenbelt concept could also mitigate potential reverse sensitivity issues of rural activities on residential living. This open space feature of the structure plan is a unifying landscape element. It would create a clear rural/urban spatial edge to Rolleston providing a distinctive identity to Rolleston, and sense of arrival at the town within the rural plains landscape.

As part of the open space network and ‘Greenbelt’ concept, it is proposed that the section of State Highway 1 between Dunns Crossing Road and Weedons Road is enhanced with amenity highway plantings. At the turn-off points to Rolleston township (Dunns Crossing, Rolleston Drive and Weedons Roads), further landscape treatment through plantings as ‘gateway’ entries could be established. Similarly, the proposed 100 hectare Park could be integrated into the Greenbelt landscape treatment providing broad linkages for jogging, mountain biking etc.’ (p93)

112. As part of the key objective to create a ‘A Sustainable Rolleston’ is the principle of ‘Self-Sufficiency’. The greenbelt and other open spaces, such as a 100ha park on the eastern edge of the town, are identified for non-urban uses that are intended to benefit the urban community:

‘A green belt, green corridors and 100 Ha park have been incorporated in the Structure Plan to provide ecological services, capacity for local energy

¹⁵ Rolleston Structure Plan – Staging of Greenfield Residential Development (Fig 5.4, p48)

generation, food production (e.g. community gardens) and strong links to the rural hinterland...' (p101)

113. It is my understanding from earlier discussions with Council officers that the detailed implementation of the greenbelt is yet to be resolved. It is currently shown within the MUL in most areas and this potentially raises issues with the definition of density calculations within RPS-PC1. However, it will most likely require delivery through the subdivision process with the potential for some purchase of land by Council to facilitate its continuity around the edge of town.
114. The greenbelt as illustrated on the structure plan crosses Dunns Crossing Road to enclose the Living 2 zoned land on the far western side of the town and includes part of the Holmes Block where it returns eastward.
115. In terms of other sustainable development considerations, the Rolleston Structure Plan indicates that:

'As one of the largest greenfield growth areas within Greater Christchurch, there is a significant opportunity to integrate sustainability initiatives over a broad scale and showcase Rolleston as a sustainable town.' (p12)

116. Under the 'A Sustainable Rolleston' key objective the 'Self-Sufficiency' principle indicates other possible uses for the remaining peri-urban areas outside the MUL. This promotes the concept of a self-reliant town, involving:

'creating a sense of place within the wider rural landscape, and providing opportunities to live, work and play locally. It also promotes the concept of self-sufficiency in water management, waste and energy generation.

[The] Structure Plan aims [to]:

...

- Create and emphasise connections between town and country (such as jobs, markets, food, energy generation and visual connections).*
- Energy production within or near the town, such as solar water heating, wind generation, co-generation (heat / steam / electricity) and waste as energy (biofuel, digesters). (p15)*

Proposed Plan Changes

117. The risk that this rural residential development becomes a 'holding zone' for further and more intensive urban development, which is not foreseen by the structure plan, has been addressed through a RPS-PC1. I support the proposed plan changes providing this assurance.
118. I note that a Countryside Area of 50m has been provided along the western side of Dunns Crossing Road. This is consistent with the proposed depth of greenbelt along the MUL boundary of the structure plan on the eastern side of Dunns Crossing Road. While I consider PC8 and 9 potentially undermine the expansive rural outlook anticipated from the township side of this urban edge, compared with retaining the

current Outer Plains zoning of the Holmes Block, I regard this as a reasonable balanced approach to achieving some visual separation without imposing a substantial physical barrier.

119. However, the Holmes Block ODP provides no 'Countryside Area' along Burnham School Road, yet, as discussed above, the structure plan identifies a short section of the MUL that follows this road. It is also likely to be a well used route for residents of Rolleston travelling to and from The Pines RRP and, in my view, should be representative of other urban edge conditions. If PC8 is to be approved, I recommend a similar transition area of equivalent depth should be provided along this edge. Furthermore, I recommend that its function is more than a 'visual transition area' and provide for those qualities anticipated for other sections of the greenbelt, as identified in the structure plan, such as 'horse riding/cycleways and running/walking tracks, ecological habitat creation, stormwater management areas, specimen and avenue tree planting, shelterbelts for wind protection', while aiming to 'retain distant views where possible'¹⁶. As the greenbelt would be more consistent along the Dunns Crossing Road, given the constraints of the existing subdivision patterns, proposed also functions as the main greenbelt between Burnham School Road and the State Highway. I support the Applicant's proposition of a public walkway along the Countryside Area along the eastern boundary and seek that the greenbelt concept is extended. However, I defer to the landscape report of Mr Craig for appropriate detailed design outcomes required from these Countryside Areas.
120. As PC8 and PC9 are the first such rural residential developments proposed on the edge of Rolleston since the structure plan was adopted, they will set a precedent for how the greenbelt will be treated in relation to these and other peri-urban land uses. The greenbelt was anticipated to be the primarily interface with rural land and this is now being tested. I consider there are two issues at stake. Firstly the partial loss of the town's rural setting and outlook for those using the greenbelt. Secondly, how to redefine the edge of peri-urban land uses once development has 'leap-frogged' the greenbelt and periphery rural roads alongside the MUL.
121. On the first point, if PC 8 and 9 were both to proceed I have calculated approximately 65% of Dunns Crossing Road will be developed in rural residential allotments, including the existing allotments near the corner of Brookside Road. If fully developed, this would become unavailable to expansive rural views for those occupying the western edge of Rolleston. I consider this extent unacceptable for rural residential developments and recommend that at least one of the developments be deleted to reduce this impact. In my view, the most likely candidate would be that of the Skellerup Block with its longer profile to the road, its more isolated location along Dunns Crossing Road and detachment from existing allotments.
122. On the second point, I consider further edge definition is required, so as to avoid the potential risk of future expansion of rural residential uses into rural land. The revised ODPs for the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks indicate 'Rural Buffer Planting' along all rural edges, which I regard as an insufficient deterrent when greenbelts and rural roads may be compromised as a result of these proposed plan changes. Recently issued ODP from the Applicant, dated 11 February 2011, indicates the additional use of larger 4Ha allotments on some rural edges. While I consider this a positive

¹⁶ Rolleston Structure Plan – Rolleston 'Green Belt' (p93)

amendment, it remains inconsistently treated. The Holmes block is more suited to clearer delineation with non-natural boundaries on two of the three new boundaries, including State Highway 1 and Burnham School Road. The amended ODP illustrates the use of larger, 4Ha allotments on the remaining western boundary, which I consider to be a good outcome to 'fill in' the gap between the Holmes Block and the Pines WWTP. The Skellerup Block is much less strongly delineated; although, I note there is a water race on its western and southern boundary. However, I defer any further detailed considerations as to the landscape treatments required to Mr Craig.

123. In my opinion, the introduction of larger 4Ha lots further assists the containment of the Skellerup Block within the surrounding rural land, where provided, and improves the rural outlook for those allotments deeper within the Block. I recommend this approach be used elsewhere along remaining rural edges.
124. However, in introducing Large Lots into both ODPs, there is a risk that where they meet the Countryside Areas the development within these lots would potentially undermine the visual connections to the rural land beyond. I further recommend view shafts are incorporated into both ODP to protect this amenity.
125. Furthermore, the nature of existing development along State Highway 1, particularly between Christchurch and Rolleston, is already substantially compromised through other peri-urban development clustering around this major national route. While this is less obvious on the western side of Rolleston, with the exception of Burnham Military Camp and Rolleston Prison, I consider the development of the Holmes block to remain less of an impact than the Skellerup Block, as I consider there is little precedent for this development typology elsewhere around the rural setting of Rolleston.
126. In regard to mitigating of the impacts of peri-urban uses along the highway boundary of the Holmes Block, I consider that the proposed 'State highway Buffer Planting Treatment Required' shown on the ODP will provides some visual mitigation. From an urban design perspective, I consider this would be strengthened further by the continuation of the tree lined avenue planting proposed in the RSP for the approach and route through Rolleston. This would need to be extended along State Highway 1 for the length of the Holmes Block frontage and mimic a similar approach on the eastern approach to Rolleston, originating at Weedens Road intersection.

Recommendations

127. I recommend the Skellerup Block be deleted due to loss of rural outlook for a considerable length of the MUL boundary along Dunns Crossing Road, when combined with existing Living 2 Zoned land and the proposed Holmes Block.
128. If PC8 and 9 were to proceed, I recommend reducing the overall number of allotments within the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks to reflect the nodal approach of RBRR/PC17 and to incorporate the following recommendations:
 - The Holmes Block ODP provides a Countryside Area, including a walkway, along Burnham School Road, at least along that section of the boundary that follows the MUL. This should provide for the qualities of the greenbelt as anticipated within the RSP.

- Introduce larger 4Ha lots with the remaining rural edges of Skellerup Block to contain further expansion of rural residential development and improve the rural outlook for those allotments deeper within the Block.
- Incorporate view shafts through the Large Lots in both ODPs to protect views from the Countryside Areas to rural land beyond.
- As part of the 'State Highway Buffer Planting Treatment Required', extend the tree lined avenue planting proposed in the RSP to the western end of the Holmes Block along the State Highway, to mimic a similar approach on the eastern approach to Rolleston, originating at Weedens Road intersection.

129. In response to submissions seeking specific relief:

- I agree in part with Paul Mason (S31 D2) who seeks an amendment 'that as an alternative the development should not proceed until all residential land in the District Plan has been developed.' The recent PC9 amendments staging the Skellerup Block to 2016 are sufficient to develop in parallel with the Goulds Road Neighbourhood in Stage 2A of the RSP, but I do not consider this should be delayed further with planned stages further the east of the MUL.
- I concur with Ernest Smith (S21 D1) seeks an amendment to 'significantly reduce (by at least 50%) the number of lots allocated to SPBL. This could be achieved by deleting either one of Plan Changes 8 or 9'. I have indicated, for the reasons given above, that I recommend PC9 (Skellerup Block) is to be deleted and the nodal approach applied to the Holmes Block.

5.3 Community Cohesion and Continuity

Relevant Submissions

130. At least one general submission was made opposing PC8 and 9 that referenced issues related to Community Cohesion and Continuity. This is listed below and quoting particular aspects of concern:

- John & Lisa Barclay (S31 D1 - PC9 only) oppose the plan changes, particularly 'why would the Council allow the Selwyn Plantation Board be allowed to go out of sequence when others are not. This is again going back to the willy nilly subdivisions...'

Urban Design Response

131. I consider the creation of highly valued urban environments, such as experienced in many town centres, market places, parks or streets, is dependent on the successful and ongoing occupation of public spaces. While the rural or natural environment is often valued for its peacefulness, urban spaces are energised through lively social interaction and the interest they stimulate through a diversity of people using them. I consider this greatly enhances the sense of place established for a town, such as Rolleston.

132. In my opinion, extensive rural residential developments potentially undermine achieving a critical mass of population who choose to reside and invest in an urban

environment over time and ensure they sustain a vibrant and interesting living environment and a community feel that continues to motivate people to move there.

133. The desire for residents moving out of towns and cities can be a reaction to the poor quality of urban environments, physically and socially, and the perception, often reinforced by developers, of newer and more attractive lower density housing on the urban edge. This referred to as the 'flight from blight' phenomenon¹⁷. Following such flight, the lack of income and investment reduces the ability of local authorities to fund solutions to urban issues and to prevent further deterioration, ultimately leading to urban decay, and greater polarisation of communities. Rolleston is a growing town where there is not only existing community infrastructure to renew, but also proposals for a range of new infrastructure to fund over time. By default this seeks to minimise the provision for rural residential developments where residents invest outside the urban limits, live in relative isolation and as such contribute less to the informal social life of the town.
134. Instead of readily identifiable urban communities, rural residential developments are often discontinuous and typified by designs that promote dispersed living arrangements. In my experience, this fails to fulfil residents' desire to maintain close social connections. Although 'telecommuting' using modern IT technologies makes communication easier, this remains a poor substitute. It generates regular, longer distance travel to and from urban areas or at least between/within other rural residential developments for social, cultural, recreational or work purposes, while also seeking to receive visitors in the opposite direction. This is not only an inefficient use of time, but can also stressful and tedious for residents. Furthermore, evidence suggests residents rarely venture into city centres or metropolitan areas in the evenings or at weekends, meaning occupation times of urban areas are also inconsistent.
135. I also consider that residents who have to consistently drive cars for most of their movement needs are less able to participate in town life. Indeed, it can further alienate urban communities through severance due to traffic and dispersal of urban uses to provide greater car parking.
136. Where rural residential is provided for, the aim is to minimise fragmented development. There is an inherent tension to visually detach yet physically integrate with existing community and there is a need to resolve this creatively through the design process. This could be exasperated by the staging of development resulting in poor cohesion between rural residential developments and growing urban areas, at least over the short to medium term. In my opinion, the directness, interest and a variety of routes can minimise actual and perceived travel times to encourage more walking and cycling to destinations on a regular basis.
137. It is also important to set up social structures in a way that a sense of community can establish quickly and coherently. In my opinion, this is best achieved through contiguous growth outward from existing urban communities. Where possible utilising key community facilities and open spaces as 'generators' or catalysts for development, can provide mutual benefits and a fulcrum point from which growth can radiate from.

¹⁷ Bradford, D. and Kelejian, H. (1973) "An Econometric Model of the Flight to the Suburbs", Journal of Political Economics, 81, 566-89

Coordinated staging of development is therefore as critical for a sense of community as it is for infrastructure in my opinion.

Rolleston Structure Plan

138. Part of the vision statement expressed early in the structure plan, reinforces the importance of community cohesion and continuity over the long term:

‘... Despite the town’s impressive growth in recent years, the town has come together well and the community spirit remains strong.’ (p10)

139. As mentioned above and discussed in the structure plan under the objective ‘Realistic and Achievable Rolleston’ a neighbourhood-by-neighbourhood approach has been taken, which allows incremental expansion of the town into the future. Brookside Neighbourhood is in close proximity to the existing town centre, adjacent to recent subdivisions and is already zoned for residential land uses. Although some ODPs are still being consented, it is likely that the land within the Brookside Neighbourhood, closest to the Holmes Block, will likely establish first. Furthermore, Brookside Park is a substantial public open space that could be used as focal point for building a broader community.

140. The importance of regeneration, in addition to providing for the growth of Rolleston, is incorporated under the ‘Well Designed Rolleston’ objective and Principle 6 ‘Regenerate Existing residential areas through shared amenities’ which encourages developers to:

‘utilise new investment as an opportunity to improve or develop new amenities where deficiencies are recognised and allow new residents to tap into and help sustain existing community facilities.’ (p17)

141. The proposed creation of a local centre within the Brookside Neighbourhood, as discussed in the previous section, is an example of where this type of regeneration opportunity arises. The proposed location of the centre will facilitate the interaction of existing residents in adjacent subdivisions with the new greenfield development of Stonebrook.

142. There is also close links within the section 5.3 Structure Plan Staging with provision of community infrastructure, including the following expectations to:

- *Encourage the growth of the Town Centre and neighbourhood centres in a logical manner, allowing continuity of social, employment and retail functions within the Town Centre, with the whole Rolleston township growing and developing in a coordinated way.*
- *Plan for greenfield residential development to occur in a way that encourages neighbourhoods to consolidate around centres and which initially supports the development of the Recreation Precinct.*

143. It goes on to identify the specific areas that have been identified for the sequence of staging for greenfield development:

- *In the first stage, provide for greenfield development to grow in a south-westerly direction, between Goulds Road and adjoining existing Living zoned land to the east.*
- *At the same time, provide for greenfield development in other areas closest to the existing town centre.*
- *In the next stage, provide for the ongoing development of greenfield land to the south-west, filling out the remaining neighbourhood and providing other facilities to complement the 'centres' – such as an additional primary school.'* (p47)

144. This indicates that the initial greenfield development stages work southwards from the Recreation Precinct in a south west direction in the general direction of the Holmes Block. When referring to the staging plan the greenfield development closest to the Holmes block, but within the MUL, will not occur until Stage 2A or between 2017-2026. This would likely originate from the Goulds Road Neighbourhood Centre and therefore reach the outer limits of the MUL, near the Skellerup Block, later rather than earlier in the timeframes given.

Proposed Plan Changes

145. The Holmes and Skellerup Blocks are clearly differentiated when considering the degree of community continuity that can be achieved in the early stages of Rolleston's growth. There are a higher proportion of existing community facilities and residential areas already extending to the MUL boundary and in reasonable proximity to the Holmes Block. Current proposals shown in the Stonebrook ODP¹⁸ indicate the remaining undeveloped greenfield areas within this north-west quarter of the MUL could also be infilled and include a new local centre. While this is not at the densities expected in other parts of the structure plan, there is likely to be a reasonably cohesive community established prior to or in parallel with development of the Holmes Block. The Skellerup Block is more likely to be out-of-sequence by being related to a later stage of greenfield development and, in my view, its community would potentially face a longer term detachment from Rolleston. In this respect, I consider with the recent amendments made to PC9, which stages the rural residential development on the Skellerup Block to 2016, to be a better outcome.
146. In my opinion, the cohesiveness of the community within Rolleston will likely be impacted by the presence of the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks, which could appear like appendages to the town. In my opinion this could dilute the sense of place across areas like the Brookside Neighbourhood, adjacent to the Holmes Block, which is already fractured by different densities and characters. In this respect, the visual detachment through the use of the Countryside Area is a positive feature to help achieve a more cohesive community within the Brookside Neighbourhood, while minimising the actual separation distance for ease of access. I also consider the establishment of a further 'Key Gateway' at the intersection of Dunns Crossing Road and Burnham School Road would be a further beneficial feature to achieve this and I recommend the development contributes to its formation.

¹⁸ Plan Change 7 - Rolleston ODP Area 1 Map

147. Moreover, a curious anomaly of the structure plan and its MUL is a small cluster of larger residential blocks on the western side of Dunns Crossing Road, also bordered by Burnham School Road in the north and Brookside Road in the south. This could potentially be better integrated into a broader rural residential community structure through development of the Holmes Block. For these reasons, I consider the Holmes Block will provide more continuity of development and feel less out of place than if the Skellerup Block is developed amidst extensive rural land.
148. In my opinion, the Countryside areas are not so wide that they disrupt the continuity of development through to each Block and will minimise any 'us and them' mentality between communities. For this latter reason, I recommend that the plan changes prevent the potential of establishing a 'gated community', but instead contribute further to the continuity of the wider community through clearly defined walking routes/ circuits that embrace the residents of Rolleston.
149. The ODPs for the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks are dispersive by the nature of their density and design. To encourage more walking and cycling to local centres and community facilities, a greater importance is placed on achieving high quality connections from door to destination. In my opinion, there needs to be some coordination in the location of public walkway access points between the ODPs and those proposed within Rolleston. As discussed in section 5.1, I recommend the routes between the Holmes Block and Stonebrook ODPs need to be more closely aligned to ensure they provide direct and visually clear passage and, preferably, a choice of routes that maintains interest for residents, as further discussed in Mr Mazey's transport report. While I consider the road cross sections presented in each plan change offer the potential for pleasant routes, on plan they appear long and potentially monotonous. The nature of each allotment will provide some interest, but I recommend provision of distinctive art instillation or landscaped rest stops along the routes would be of further benefit to users in addition to the Community Focal Point/ Reserves and should be considered in detail at subdivision consent stage.
150. Although there are some design improvements that could be made to the ODPs, I remain concerned that a higher dependency on car usage from those living within these rural residential developments will have widespread impact on the quality of urban spaces within Rolleston. This could manifest itself through greater severance of communities across busy roads and greater car parking demands around various centres and community facilities that dilute their vitality. The traffic report indicates there is capacity to accommodate the trips, but I recommend more consideration is given to the impacts of this additional traffic loading on the cohesion of the community.

Conclusions

151. The Applicant should further consider the potential severance and amenity impacts on urban communities and associated centres and community facilities within the MUL from greater car dependence and commuting residents.
152. If PC8 and 9 were to proceed, I recommend reducing the overall number of allotments within the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks to reflect the nodal approach of RBRR/PC17 and to incorporate the following recommendations:

- The contribution from PC8 to the establishment of a further 'Key Gateway' at the intersection of Dunns Crossing Road and Burnham School Road to maintain and enhance a legible entrance to Rolleston.
- Add a note to the ODPs to prevent the establishment of a 'gated community', and contribute further to the continuity of the wider community through providing clearly defined walking routes/ circuits that embrace the residents of Rolleston.
- Coordinate the proposed road alignment connecting the Holmes Block to Dunns Crossing Road with that proposed for the Stonebrook development opposite to facilitate access to its local centre.
- Provide for distinctive art instillation or landscaped rest stops along the routes to complement the Community Focal Point/ Reserves already provided in the ODPs. This should be considered in detail at subdivision consent stage.

5.4 Character and Amenity Provisions

Relevant Submissions

153. A number of general submissions were made opposing PC8 and 9 that have referenced issues related to Character and Amenity Provisions. These are listed below and quoting particular aspects of concern:

- Malvin Griebel (S4 D1) and Janice Griebel (S5 D1) both oppose the plan changes, particularly in relation to their environment 'The erection of dwellings instead of just paddocks from us will adversely effect our environment; looking at houses instead of just paddocks with cattle grazing...'
- Canterbury Regional Council (S18 D1) oppose the plan changes, particularly that '...it is considered development of the site may exhibit a low density urban character'
- John & Lisa Barclay (S31 D1) oppose the plan changes 9, particularly questioning 'How can this subdivision blend with the rural look of existing properties opposite when the supposed rural buffer has a minimum of 15 driveway access points as well as the two internal access roads'...'to maintain any semblance of the rural character the access to all properties should from within the subdivision and egress via the town new roads only. These roadsides are currently used by equine enthusiasts. How are we supposed to ride horses around the road safely? There will be no rural look whatsoever'. 'I will personally miss my views of the Southern Alps which are iconic for me...views will become less open and more residential especially with all if the roadside sections having direct access onto Dunns Crossing Road.'

Urban Design Response

154. Intensification of residential areas reduces the amount of some private amenity the residents have. Ideally this gets transferred to the public realm, or common areas, of the town where it can potentially be shared by all. This can increase the extent and quality of the amenity while also increasing the efficiency of its establishment and

reducing maintenance burden on individuals. The provision of public amenity, such as urban parks, therefore, aims to offset or mitigate the intensification of residential areas.

155. Historically, the setting aside of large areas of parkland within urban areas was motivated by overcrowding and industrialisation within towns and cities and aimed to provide greater health benefits, proximity to the wide open spaces and to maintain some connection with nature. In post-industrial times, this thinking has progressed to provide a varied network of open spaces that actually connect with rural land via green corridors and waterways. These public open spaces can fulfil a multifunctional role, which provide different types of passive and active recreation, urban ecology and other soft infrastructure.
156. There is also a perceived value in maintaining links to rural land, in my view, as it sets the context in which residents live and is often a key differentiator to attract them to a smaller town, rather than a sprawling city. The fact that rural land is in close proximity to a town, makes these types of landscapes more highly cherished and emphasises the non-production role played by rural areas.
157. There is also a growing demand to increase access to rural land and this is particularly evident with the 'Right to Roam' movement in the UK, but also more locally in the establishment of walking and cycling tracks in the Port Hills and local forest lands (i.e. McLean's Island and Bottle Lake Forest) on the edge of Christchurch. It is now recognised that all the recreation resources of a town should be seen as a 'recreational system', comprising both public and private, indoor and outdoor, within and outside its urban boundary, which offers a wide variety of substitutable opportunities to residents and visitors alike¹⁹.
158. However, even though residents may not be able to access rural land physically, it is still perceived to be there or available to view when desired. It is increasingly being recognised that towns and districts are competing to attract scarce and transitory investment, particularly in these recessionary times. The amenity provided within and around a town can contribute greatly to a lifestyle appeal and therefore its ability to attract future residents and the businesses that can support and service them. In considering the extent of rural residential, there is a risk that the very rural qualities that attract residents to a town and make it a popular place to live are compromised by the subsequent loss of amenity in accommodating them. This has been referred to as the "regional open space paradox"²⁰ where the qualities of the town and rural environment can both be compromised through its own success.
159. Changes should not be looked at in isolation from the wider urban context as the processes and patterns observed at the urban edge are intricately linked to other initiatives within the town. Rural residential development potentially undermines the incentives for investing in urban regeneration and intensification within older parts of a town and more intensive greenfield developments that surround them.
160. There are also additional risks that any displacement of residential population from more intensively developed urban neighbourhoods to rural residential areas potentially reduces or delays ability to establish and support this urban amenity. The lack of or

¹⁹ Rodgers, B. (1969) "Leisure and Recreation", *Urban Studies*, 6, 368-383.

²⁰ Low Choy, D. C. (2004) "The Regional Open Space Paradox", *Queensland Planner*, 44(3), 12-15.

lesser quality of this amenity through underinvestment, potentially reduces incentives for more intensive development and, therefore, becomes a compounding problem for a town seeking to establish itself.

161. There are other reciprocal impacts, for example, increased traffic on roads constructed to facilitate easy movement to, around, or between urban areas. In my experience, the addition of more traffic on urban streets and parking demand in a town centre or community facility car parks introduces a range of amenity impacts for urban residents within the town.

Rolleston Structure Plan

162. The vision for Rolleston, as expressed in the structure plan, focuses on maintaining the character of a rural town and describes the amenity benefits from potential interweaving of various experiences that can occur with urban life:

'The town has been successful in drawing a distinctive character from its close associations with the rural landscape in which it discretely sits - you can still catch glimpses of the Port Hills or Southern Alps as you move around the town. Enhancing the natural character of Rolleston has reflected Ngai Tahu's association and identity with the landscape and will also enhance the town's distinctive character.'

...The various festivals and weekly market are events that gather the community together in the town square on a regular basis. Many combine a visit to the town centre with their trip to see the new exhibition at the art gallery, their kids competing at the nearby Recreation Precinct or following a long walk, bike or horse ride around the town's green belt.

...All in all, residents are pretty proud of Rolleston and what's been achieved over the last few years. It hasn't lost what residents enjoyed about Rolleston when it was smaller, but has grown better as it's matured.'

163. Section 5.2.1 'Character Features Development Drivers and Neighbourhoods' of the structure plan emphasises the careful balancing that will need to occur as Rolleston at least doubles in size, yet recognising the need to retain the features that attracts residents to live there:

'One of Rolleston's distinctive features is its "rural town" feel. However, due to its size as the biggest town in Selwyn and close links to Christchurch, the future growth of Rolleston will need to adopt more urban approaches. The Structure Plan aims to strike a balance between the two and seeks to enhance...rural or existing character features throughout the town' (p45)

164. In formulating the structure plan there was an appreciation that residents who choose to move to Rolleston are attracted to the rural amenity that larger cities, like Christchurch, are less able to offer. The structure plan has made a concerted effort to provide open spaces and character within the MUL that can offer some of the benefits of rural living, such as outlook on to wide open spaces and less formal recreational opportunities. In my opinion, there will be the ability for residents to seek out those parts of Rolleston within the MUL that best offer these types of experiences without overly compromising on the density imperative. At the end of the 'Open Space'

chapter, the checklist for 'A Well Designed Rolleston' summarising the intended outcomes of the structure plan that strongly contribute these qualities:

'Open spaces of varying size, uses and qualities will be integrated into all aspects of the Structure Plan, from high quality intensively used spaces in the town centre to more informal provisions in the 100Ha District Park. These are linked together via green corridors or feature avenues along existing rural roads. Indicative cross sections provided through open spaces, including the green belt, ensure there are public edges to all surrounding developments for accessibility and safety.'

Existing rural character features (i.e. shelter belts, water races) have been incorporated into green corridors or their retention has been encouraged throughout all developments. Similarly, the maintenance and enhancement of strategic views to the Southern Alps and Banks Peninsula have also been promoted.

The large Recreation Precinct is located centrally within the MUL, yet on the fringes of a number of more intensively developed neighbourhoods that cluster around it.' (p100)

165. The structure plan considers, under the objective of Realistic and Achievable Rolleston, the resource efficiency and greater pulling power of users when public open space, community facilities and centres are considered together as a concentrated form of amenity provision:

'Co-location with other facilities allows for an integrated design and management. A critical mass of users is able to be established to support a local centre and initiate more intense, higher quality, development in close proximity.' (p101)

166. Under the same objective, the principal of 'Maintaining and managing quality places' highlights that the structure plan needs to consider the potential long term implications to the community, if these capital investments are not supported thorough good urban design and careful management:

'Implementing high quality developments on the ground is only the start of the process. When developing a Structure Plan that spans generations, it is important to work carefully through the design process and set in place clear management structures early. This ensures the town matures sensitively and avoids any capital investment becoming a liability for the town in later years.' (p21)

167. There is a concentration of core community facilities located centrally within the structure plan as a means to evenly service and provide amenity to both the existing and new urban communities. Neighbourhood centres surround them, but the integrity of their walkable catchments is not generally affected by the presence of these larger spaces at the heart of the town. Other more linear spaces are also provided that link public open spaces together into a network and integrate them into the rural fringe at arrival and departure points:

'The gateway and avenue features are indicated in the short term to quickly establish a maturity for the town and coordinate with planned upgrades for key rural roads within the MUL.' (p101)

168. Avenue planting along State Highway 1 is one of the proposed features on the 'Public Open Space' map²¹, where it follows the northern edge of the town and where it dissects it along the southern boundary of Izone Business Hub. This continues an existing avenue of trees on the eastern side, linking up the town with Weedens Road, and finishes near the Holmes Block at the intersection with Dunns Crossing Road.
169. 'Key Gateways' are also shown positioned at three intersections with State Highway 1 and at the intersection of Lowes Rd and Dunns Crossing Road. The structure plan does not currently show one at the intersection of State Highway 1 and Dunns Crossing Road, as this was not considered a major entrance into Rolleston at the time.

Proposed Plan Changes

170. I consider the incorporation of the Countryside Areas within recent versions of the ODPs is a positive and innovative feature of the rural residential developments and will likely help to integrate PC8 and 9 into both rural and urban contexts. I acknowledge that these have reduced the average allotment size to below that provided for in RPS-PC1 and, like public open spaces in urban environments, transfer some private amenity into common areas under collective management. However, I do not consider them to be an effective substitute for the existing openness of rural land and recommend a greater mix of larger allotments are provided to break up the more concentrated residential areas centrally located within each Block.
171. If the plan changes do proceed, I concur with the intention to provide a 'visual transition area' along Dunns Crossing Road to maintain a rural feel for those travelling on the outskirts of the town. Given the potential increased prominence of the intersection of Dunns Crossing and Burnham School Roads on the edge of the MUL, I consider it is necessary to add an additional key gateway into town the town at this point. In my opinion this will further reinforce the distinction of the town limits with peri-urban uses on its fringes. I recommend some contribution is made to establishing this through the plan change process.
172. I also commend the use of rectilinear patterns within the ODPs and consider this does achieve some of the character traits of the rural land that design principles within the structure plan are seeking from greenfield developments. I remain unconvinced as to how responsive the layout is to the actual field boundaries and other existing landscape features within the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks and have deferred analysis of this aspect to Mr Craig. From an urban design perspective, I have concerns that an overly uniform approach to the allotment layouts and a limited hierarchy of routes will raise issues with wayfinding and legibility throughout the blocks, particularly for visitors. I recommend this be addressed through a reduction in allotment numbers and a greater mix of allotment and block sizes.
173. It is unclear in the plan change documentation what the purpose of and features expected within the Community Focal Point/Reserve within each development are. I

²¹ Rolleston Structure Plan – Public Open Space map (figure 7.3, p90)

consider there is the potential to provide communal facilities that may be able to minimise some travel distances, inefficient provision on each allotment and encourage informal social interaction, such as children's play facilities, tennis courts, post boxes and the like. I recommend more consideration is given to these.

174. Furthermore, the Holmes block is relatively close to formal sports fields at Brookside Park, located on the western edge of Rolleston. Many local recreation needs could be fulfilled there and I recommend carefully integrating the access routes within the ODP with those along Duns Crossing Road. The detail of this is best achieved when applying for subdivision consent. The Skellerup Block is less accessible and will be more reliant on the Council or other developers completing the proposed greenbelt link to Brookside Park.
175. In my opinion, the potential loss of amenity, such as expansive views, proximity and access to the edge of rural land, for residents of the town should be recognised. As recommend above, I regard the completion of the proposed greenbelt is an important aspect of this. I also recommend that assurances are sought through the plan change process that these rural residential developments will not become gated communities thereby preventing recreational access around and through this peri-urban area and that a note to this effect could be added on the ODP.
176. One of my primary concerns is the impact the development of 175 number lots outside the MUL of Rolleston will potentially have on the investment in regeneration of existing urban land and uptake of planned greenfield development. There is a risk that this may affect the speed, extent and quality of delivery of urban amenity if this growth is threatened. I recommend minimising the number of rural residential allotments outside the MUL to minimise these risks.

Recommendations

177. The Applicant should further consider the potential impact of PC 8 and 9, developed outside the MUL, on the investment in regeneration of existing urban land and uptake of planned greenfield development within Rolleston township. There is a risk that this may affect the speed, extent and quality of delivery of urban amenity to support sustained growth.
178. If PC8 and 9 were to proceed, I recommend reducing the overall number of allotments within the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks to reflect the nodal approach of RBRR/PC17 and to incorporate the following recommendations:
- A greater mix of larger allotments is provided to break up the more concentrated residential areas centrally located within each Block.
 - The contribution from PC8 to the establishment of a further 'Key Gateway' at the intersection of Dunns Crossing Road and Burnham School Road to maintain and enhance a legible entrance to Rolleston.
 - Improve way finding and legibility throughout the Blocks, particularly for visitors, through a reduction in allotment numbers and a greater mix of allotment and block sizes.

- Provide for shared communal facilities that may be able to minimise some travel distances, inefficient provision on each allotment and encourage informal social interaction, such as children's play facilities, tennis courts, post boxes and the like.
- Careful integration of access routes within the ODP with those along Duns Crossing Road through the subdivision consent process.
- Add a note to the ODPs to prevent the establishment of a 'gated community', and contribute further to the continuity of the wider community through providing clearly defined walking routes/ circuits that embrace the residents of Rolleston.

5.5 Choice and Diversity

Relevant Submissions

179. A number of general submissions were made opposing PC8 and 9 that have referenced issues related to Choice and Diversity. These are listed below and quoting particular aspects of concern:

- Susan Chaney (S27 D1) oppose the plan changes, particularly 'The sections are too small for animals... neighbours would complain'
- John & Lisa Barclay (S31 D1 - PC9 only) oppose the plan change, particularly relating to the small allotments 'I know of numerous people that want 1ha-20ha [allotments]. The reasons are various including the privacy, going to more self sufficient society, areas to accommodate various hobbies...The proposed subdivision of smaller lots (less than 1ha) is not appropriate....They become sick of maintenance or decided to cash in. People investing in lots of 1ha or more are generally aware of the maintenance that will be required...In fact all it is really is large sections with large dwellings and large garden. It is not rural living at all. Some of it is; however adjacent to rural land which gives a rural feel.'
- General submissions indicating there are opportunities for alternative rural residential locations in the District, include:
 - Robert Barker (S1 D1) oppose the plan changes
 - Mark Larson (S2 D1) oppose the plan changes
 - Poultry Industry Association of NZ Inc. & Tegal Foods Ltd. (S8 D1) oppose the plan changes
 - Bob Paton (S13 D1) oppose the plan changes
 - Sam Carrick (S19 D1) oppose the plan changes, but only if it adversely affects the equitable allocation of rural residential land
 - B&A George and S&S Cunningham (S20 D1) oppose the plan changes

- Denwood Trustees (S22 D1) oppose the plan changes
- The West Melton/ Newtons Road Group (S23 D1) oppose the plan changes
- K McIntosh, Wha Jung & Se Kyung Lee (S24 D1) oppose the plan changes
- BC & MA Coles Family Trust (S25 D1) oppose the plan changes
- John & Lisa Barclay (S31 D1 - PC9 only) oppose the plan change

180. Those submitters seeking specific relief, include:

- Sam Carrick (S19 D1) oppose the plan changes, but only if it adversely affects the equitable allocation of rural residential land around the other townships

Urban Design Response

181. 'Choice' is one of the qualities recognised in the 'Seven Cs' of the NZ urban design protocol.

'Quality urban design fosters diversity and offers people choice in the urban form of our towns and cities, and choice in densities, building types, transport options, and activities. Flexible and adaptable design provides for unforeseen uses, and creates resilient and robust towns and cities.'

182. As indicated in the above quote, choice and diversity are closely related. While the benefits of choice are relatively clear, diversity is less so. Diversity of residents improves the tolerance of a community to difference and, through this, allows the freedom for more personal expression. This can promote creativity within an urban community, improving its ability to respond to different opportunities, be innovative and, therefore, competitive and resilient to change.

183. In my opinion, this is best achieved in an urban environment with a fine-grained mix of uses that avoids the monotony of both highly segregated activities and lower densities. The challenge is to create a diversity of living arrangements and attract a mix of residents, so there is a dynamic and vitality in a town. This creates an urban environment where residents move around on different schedules and for different purposes, but who continue to use many facilities in common. This increases the potential for informal social interaction.

184. I do not consider that it is necessary to have a forced mix of incompatible uses but at least relies on good access and mobility, as discussed in the section on 'Urban Form and Coordinated Growth' above. This allows residents to naturally find a neighborhood or community group that they associate with while ensuring the creative energies of diversity is harnessed. Proximity, which increases the chances of social interaction, is therefore important.

185. Providing for choice and diversity also reduces the risk of excluding resident groups, it is important that residents can find the type of accommodation option that suits their particular needs or that those who already live in the town have ability to relocate

within their own community as their needs change. It is inevitably a fine balance, in my view, between catering for residents' needs and desires while also having a strategic and balanced view of the town.

186. In my opinion, rural residential developments can provide opportunities for self sufficiency for individual residents, rather than operating wholly within a community-based system. I consider there is an inherent flexibility and adaptability in larger rural residential lots for a range of land uses and which can remain relevant over the long term.
187. In particular, rural residential development would suit those looking to 'downshift' the intensity of their lives or operate more in live-work situations. From a living perspective, these types of lot sizes can provide sufficient land to grow produce in gardens, orchards and to keep small livestock, minimising dependency and frequency of travel into urban areas. From a working perspective, small home-based businesses can operate with less land constraints if, for example, separate office quarters or storage areas were needed to be established. 'Telecommuting' and other decentralised business activities make it easier to avoid excessive travel in those situations where living and work can be combined and reliance on other employees is limited. Moreover, the edges of urban areas tend to be close to higher order distribution networks, such as highways and rail links. These types of infrastructure typically occupy the peri-urban areas as higher speeds and the larger land take requirements are less inhibited.
188. Another potential consequence of too much choice, in terms of providing for a high number of residents to live in rural residential developments, is the influence it can have on other activities and their distribution. The dispersal of workers to fringe parts of a town can in turn influence the relocation of businesses to provide employment for these dispersed populations and/or retailers to service them. This can potentially change the dynamics within urban areas and may reduce the choice and diversity of other activities within the town. I consider, providing some choice is acceptable, but not so much that it compromises other urban qualities.

Rolleston Structure Plan

189. Choice of accommodation was considered an important quality within the MUL and was communicated early in the vision statement:

The residents of the district find it relatively easy to find just the right place to live as they look to move house within the community they are familiar with, staying close to friends; or to relocate into the town for new work or retirement off the farm

190. Under the 'A Sustainable Rolleston' objective and its 'Improved Wellbeing' principal, the concept of diversity was also introduced. One of the key structure plan aims was to create:

'Varied and accessible community services that reflect the cultural diversity of the community' (p14)

191. Both choice and diversity are then addressed within the 'A Well Designed Rolleston' objective, particularly through Principle 5:

‘Overlapping mix of land uses’

- *Provide a wide variety of land use activities (e.g. retail, office, community facilities) within comfortable walking distance of the highest population densities;*
- *Utilise a mix of uses to encourage a diverse and compatible range of activities, particularly in centres;*
- *Provide a choice of housing typologies to cater for a range of different lifestyles.’ (p16)*

192. These key aims and principals are then incorporated in to section 5.2 ‘Key Aspects of the Structure Plan’ under the sub-heading of ‘Land use patterns and community facilities’:

‘A mix of living zones will be provided in Rolleston to create diversity in the community and deliver a range of residential housing types to meet community needs. For greenfield areas in Rolleston, the Structure Plan provides a density spread of 20, 15 and 10 households per hectare. In these areas section sizes would range between 375m² to 750m². Higher proposed densities are concentrated in close proximity to the town centre and supporting neighbourhood centres, including some comprehensive housing developments within or immediately adjacent to these. Further residential infill and intensification is anticipated in underdeveloped parts of existing zoned land.’ (p43)

193. Section 7.1.2 ‘Urban Grain’, further reinforces the relationship between urban form and choice:

‘New housing developments in Rolleston will fit into an overall structure, which identifies important links and areas where a tighter urban grain with smaller lot sizes and shorter blocks are most appropriate. The most compact patterns are intended to occur closer to town and neighbourhood centres with more relaxed patterns on the fringes. This approach matches the increase in population within walking distance of the centres, providing greater permeability and variety of routes, while also increasing the choice of lot sizes and housing typologies within the town.’ (p78)

194. These illustrate that there are a variety of lot sizes provided for within the MUL, beyond the intensification areas located around the various centres. There is also the flexibility to provide larger lot sizes in the context of Rolleston’s rural character, as explained under the ‘Land Use’ chapter of the structure plan:

‘Due to Rolleston’s ‘rural town’ character the densities on the lower end of the benchmarking spectrum are more relevant: however they illustrate that the minimum density required close to urban centres and public transport is approximately 15HH/Ha.’ (p83)

195. I consider the large extent of rural residential land within PC8 and 9 potentially compromises this message. However, analysis of the existing Rolleston context in Section 7.2.3 ‘Current Densities’ indicates there are the existing Living 2 (5,000m²) and

Living 2A (10,000m²) zoned land in the district plan that provides for comparable densities to those proposed for the Living 3 zone in PC8 and 9. The structure plan proposes to infill these over time in line with RPS-PC1 density targets of 10 households per hectare within the Urban Limits. This in turn, is likely to increase the demand for rural residential forms of development within rural zoned land on the periphery of townships. It could be argued, in my view, that this type and number of rural residential allotments could be appropriately redistributed beyond the urban limit with minimal net loss on the existing baseline.

196. The Holmes Block is in close proximity to the existing zoned areas of Living 2 (up to 5000m²) and Living 1B deferred land, which already provide choices for larger rural residential allotments over the short term. Although in the latter case, the Council has recently been working with residents to manage the transition from larger lots towards Living 1B (750-1200m²) densities. There are also a large number of recently developed Living 1 (up to 750m²) lots, which are unlikely to be redeveloped in the short or medium term. As discussed earlier, the ODP for the remaining undeveloped land in this area, the Stonebridge development, is unlikely to change this mix in any considerable way. I consider there will be a particularly flat density gradient in this north-western quarter of the structure plan, until the neighbourhood centre becomes a more viable proposition. This is only likely to occur when the demand for infill the larger lots in this area is stimulated and the area is able to regenerate.
197. Adjacent to the north-western corner of the Skellerup Block, there is existing provision for Living 2A (up to 10 000m²) sections. In my opinion, these could create a barrier between smaller zoned land, discussed above, and a range of densities provided within the greenfield development areas. It is unclear how quickly these would be subdivided into smaller sections, as indicated in the structure plan. In my experience, this poses a number of land management issues, which would require a high degree of cooperation between a multiple and discrete land owners, and is likely to take longer than releasing larger and contiguous rural land parcels with fewer owners. The consequences of this, in my view, are that the connections and finer land use mix required to fully promote choice and diversity in this part of the structure plan will be limited in the short to medium term.

Proposed Plan Changes

198. The number of allotments provided for across PC8 and 9, 102 in Holmes Block and 73 in Skellerup Block, equates to a high proportion of the RPS-PC1 allocation for SDC. While the brief of the structure plan did not allow for the consideration of rural residential development, this type of development is anticipated within RPS-PC1 to provide for a diversity and range of living environments. However, this was not specifically allocated to a particular town in the Selwyn District and, if exclusively provided for around Rolleston, it will likely diminish the choice and diversity for other townships. Although, I do agree that there is a case for priority around the KACs of Rolleston and Lincoln, where existing employment and community services are best provided in closer proximity to residents of rural residential developments. I have not assessed the potential for Lincoln and other towns within the District to provide for rural residential developments, but I consider if there are opportunities to more evenly allocate allotments across towns, particularly with Lincoln, then this would enhance the choice and diversity available to a wider spectrum of residents.

199. I acknowledge the introduction of larger 4Ha 'lifestyle' blocks into the recent ODPs, increase the variety of allotments available and potentially creating options for residents to be more self sufficient. However, I remain concerned with the limited variety and high degree of regularity evident in other allotment sizes and configurations. I recommend considering this further in combination with recommendations made in the section on 'Character and Amenity' above.
200. Without some influence over the type of residents that could most suitably use these peri-urban areas, then I consider there remains a risk that these rural residential developments would result in having a very limited mix or type of resident and simply become a segregated dormitory suburb with little to offer in diversifying the town's community or business structures. While the plan change documents establish a demand for rural residential lots, as identified in the valuer's report, there appears to be little discussion on why this type of activity is needed and what contribution they make to the wider Rolleston community. While I recognise rural residential developments can cater well for those residents wanting to isolate themselves from urban areas, I consider more justification is required with respect to how much representation is appropriate to achieve a balanced community and why this should be prioritised over or displace alternative activities that could provide other choice and diversity benefits.
201. I also acknowledge the potential for additional residents living around Rolleston to positively contribute to the success of the town. However, I consider a wide range of choice and diversity can be more effectively provided through the continual infill and greenfield growth of the town, which supports the centre strategy and community facilities provided for through the structure plan. I recommend limiting the number of allotments provided to target more appropriate urban choices avoid any compromise to the town's centre-based growth strategy.

Recommendations

202. The Applicant should further consider the justification as to how much representation is appropriate to achieve a balanced community and why this should be prioritised over or displace alternative activities that could provide other choice and diversity benefits to Rolleston.
203. If PC8 and 9 were to proceed, I recommend reducing the overall number of allotments within the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks to reflect the nodal approach of RBRR/PC17 and to incorporate the following recommendations:
- Provide a greater mix of larger allotments to provide greater choice for and diversity of residents.

6.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

204. In summary, I recommend the following considerations and amendments to the proposed plan change provisions as collated from the previous sections of this report:

6.1 Urban Form and Coordinated Growth

205. I recommend further considerations should be given to alternative peri-urban land uses that better contribute to sustainable management of the town and its rural context.

206. If PC8 and 9 were to proceed, I recommend reducing the overall number of allotments within the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks to reflect the nodal approach of RBRR/PC17 and to incorporate the following recommendations:

- Identify on each ODP key community linkages to be established with existing and proposed facilities within the MUL, as indicated in the Rolleston Structure Plan. Prepare assessment matters to ensure these are direct, pleasant and varied.
- Coordinate the proposed road alignment connecting the Holmes Block to Dunns Crossing Road with that proposed for the Stonebrook development opposite to facilitate access to its local centre.
- Coordinate the proposed road alignment connecting the Skellerup to Dunns Crossing Road with that proposed for the Neighbourhood and Local Centre within the Goulds Road Neighbourhood.
- Utilise development contributions from the Skellerup Block to facilitate the proposed main (primary) road link with it and the proposed Neighbourhood Centre on Goulds Road.

207. In response to submissions seeking specific relief:

- I concur with the Poultry Industry Association of NZ Inc. & Tegal Foods Ltd. (S8 D2) seeks an amendment that should the Plan Change be approved, the scale should be reduced to be more consistent with Plan Change 1 (i.e. a lower number of lots). I consider these should be closely aligned with the RBRR/PC7 nodal approach providing for 50 allotments.
- I consider the recent ODP amendments, dated 11th February 2011, addresses the submissions by the New Zealand Transport Agency (S11 D1 and D2) seeking an amendment that the minimum allotment size be increased to 1 hectare to be in alignment with the definition of 'rural residential' in PC1. This is achieved through the addition of five 'Large Lots' in each Block and the distribution of a large proportion of land into the Countryside Areas shown on the ODP.

6.2 Urban Containment and Edge Conditions

208. I recommend the Skellerup Block be avoided due to loss of rural outlook for a considerable length of the MUL boundary along Dunns Crossing Road, when combined with existing Living 2 Zoned land and the proposed Holmes Block.
209. If PC8 and 9 were to proceed, I recommend reducing the overall number of allotments within the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks to reflect the nodal approach of RBRR/PC17 and to incorporate the following recommendations:
- The Holmes Block ODP provides a Countryside Area, including a walkway, along Burnham School Road, at least along that section of the boundary that follows the MUL. This should provide for the qualities of the greenbelt as anticipated within the RSP.
 - Introduce larger 4Ha lots with the remaining rural edges of Skellerup Block to contain further expansion of rural residential development and improve the rural outlook for those allotments deeper within the Block.
 - Incorporate view shafts through the Large Lots in both ODPs to protect views from the Countryside Areas to rural land beyond.
 - As part of the 'State Highway Buffer Planting Treatment Required', extend the tree lined avenue planting proposed in the RSP to the western end of the Holmes Block along the State Highway, to mimic a similar approach on the eastern approach to Rolleston, originating at Weedens Road intersection.
210. In response to submissions seeking specific relief:
- I agree in part with Paul Mason (S31 D2) who seeks an amendment 'that as an alternative the development should not proceed until all residential land in the District Plan has been developed.' The recent PC9 amendments staging the Skellerup Block to 2016 are sufficient to develop in parallel with the Goulds Road Neighbourhood in Stage 2A of the RSP, but I do not consider this should be delayed further with planned stages further the east of the MUL.
 - I concur with Ernest Smith (S21 D1) seeks an amendment to 'significantly reduce (by at least 50%) the number of lots allocated to SPBL. This could be achieved by deleting either one of Plan Changes 8 or 9'. I have indicated, for the reasons given above, that I recommend PC9 (Skellerup Block) is to be deleted and the nodal approach applied to the Holmes Block.

6.3 Community Cohesion and Continuity

211. The Applicant should further consider the potential severance and amenity impacts on urban communities and associated centres and community facilities within the MUL from greater car dependence and commuting residents.
212. If PC8 and 9 were to proceed, I recommend reducing the overall number of allotments within the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks to reflect the nodal approach of RBRR/PC17 and to incorporate the following recommendations:

- The contribution from PC8 to the establishment of a further 'Key Gateway' at the intersection of Dunns Crossing Road and Burnham School Road to maintain and enhance a legible entrance to Rolleston.
- Add a note to the ODPs to prevent the establishment of a 'gated community', and contribute further to the continuity of the wider community through providing clearly defined walking routes/ circuits that embrace the residents of Rolleston.
- Coordinate the proposed road alignment connecting the Holmes Block to Dunns Crossing Road with that proposed for the Stonebrook development opposite to facilitate access to its local centre.
- Provide for distinctive art instillation or landscaped rest stops along the routes to complement the Community Focal Point/ Reserve already provided in the ODPs. This should be considered in detail at subdivision consent stage.

6.4 Character and Amenity Provisions

213. The Applicant should further consider the potential impact of PC 8 and 9, developed outside the MUL, on the investment in regeneration of existing urban land and uptake of planned greenfield development within Rolleston township. There is a risk that this may affect the speed, extent and quality of delivery of urban amenity to support sustained growth.
214. If PC8 and 9 were to proceed, I recommend reducing the overall number of allotments within the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks to reflect the nodal approach of RBRR/PC17 and to incorporate the following recommendations:
- A greater mix of larger allotments is provided to break up the more concentrated residential areas centrally located within each Block.
 - The contribution from PC8 to the establishment of a further 'Key Gateway' at the intersection of Dunns Crossing Road and Burnham School Road to maintain and enhance a legible entrance to Rolleston.
 - Improve way finding and legibility throughout the Blocks, particularly for visitors, through a reduction in allotment numbers and a greater mix of allotment and block sizes.
 - Provide for shared communal facilities that may be able to minimise some travel distances, inefficient provision on each allotment and encourage informal social interaction, such as children's play facilities, tennis courts, post boxes and the like.
 - Careful integration of access routes within the ODP with those along Duns Crossing Road through the subdivision consent process.
 - Add a note to the ODPs to prevent the establishment of a 'gated community', and contribute further to the continuity of the wider community through

providing clearly defined walking routes/ circuits that embrace the residents of Rolleston.

6.5 Choice and Diversity

215. The Applicant should further consider the justification as to how much representation is appropriate to achieve a balanced community and why this should be prioritised over or displace alternative activities that could provide other choice and diversity benefits to Rolleston.
216. If PC8 and 9 were to proceed, I recommend reducing the overall number of allotments within the Holmes and Skellerup Blocks to reflect the nodal approach of RBRR/PC17 and to incorporate the following recommendations:
- Provide a greater mix of larger allotments to provide greater choice for and diversity of residents.

Tim Church
Principal/ Urban Designer
Boffa Miskell Limited